Marking Blackness:

Embodied Techniques of Racialization in Early Modern European Theatre

Ngara Noémie N'diaye

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
under the Executive Committee
of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

2017

ABSTRACT

Marking Blackness:
Embodied Techniques of Racialization in Early Modern European Theatre

Noémie Ndiaye

This dissertation is a comparative and transnational study of the techniques of racial impersonation used by white performers to represent black Afro-diasporic people in early modern England, Spain, and France. The racialization of blackness that took place in England at the turn of the sixteenth century has been well studied over the course of the last thirty years. This dissertation expands English early modern race scholarship in new directions by revealing the existence of a multi-directional circulation of racial ideas, lexemes, and performance techniques that led to the development of a vivid trans-European stage idiom of blackness across national borders in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. While early modern race scholarship has traditionally focused on the rhetorical and dramatic strategies used by playwrights to create black characters, this dissertation brings to the fore the ideological work inherent in *performance*. It does so by arguing that the techniques of racial impersonation used in various loci of European performance culture, such as blackface, blackspeak (a comic mock-African accent), and black dances, racialized Afro-diasporic people as they led spectators in a variety of ways to think of those people as belonging naturally at the bottom of any well-constituted social order. This dissertation shows how the hermeneutic configurations and re-configurations of techniques of racial impersonation such as blackface, blackspeak, and black dance responded to social changes, to the development of colonization and color-based slavery, and to changing perceptions of what Afro-diasporic people's status should be in European and Atlantic societies across the early modern period.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project could not have come to fruition without the unwavering support of my dissertation committee members: Jean E. Howard, Kim F. Hall, Madeleine Dobie, and Patricia Grieve. Were it not for their intellectual generosity, rigorousness, patience, exigence, and enthusiasm, this dissertation would not exist. I was spoiled to have such a committee. I am particularly indebted to my advisor and mentor, Jean E. Howard, in more ways than I can say.

I want to thank Julie S. Peters, Barbara Fuchs, Christian Biet, V.K Preston, and Josiah Blackmore for reading drafts and kindly sharing their expertise, questions, and advice with me. Julie S. Peters believed in me from the start—I cannot thank her enough for that. For their sustained feedback at various stages of this project, I am grateful to the members of the research collaborative Theatre Without Borders (especially Susanne Wofford and Pam Brown), as well as the faculty and graduate students of the Theatre Colloquium and the Early Modern Colloquium at Columbia University. Heartfelt thanks go to Patricia Grieve for introducing me to the wonders of early modern Spanish theatre, to Elisabeth Angel-Perez for making me read Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko* ten years ago, and to Chantal Brière for teaching me all I know about acting.

This project and the archival research it required (in Spain and in France) were funded by Columbia University and by a Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship. I was lucky to receive the help of wonderful librarians and archivists such as Candice Kail, Alfredo Montilla Carvajal, and Nazario Aguilar Montes. I also received invaluable bibliographic information from Pierre Force, Toby Wikström, and Sylvie Requemora-Gros. Finally, I must thank my family, especially Lucie Reltgen, Marie-Claire Reltgen, and Ernesto Matos-Gutiérrez, for I could not have written this dissertation without their unconditional love and patience.

INTRODUCTION

1) Histories of Racial Impersonation

January 4, 2016. Seville, Spain. Thousands of people had gathered in the city's streets to attend the annual Cavalcade of Magi: *la calabalgata de reyes*. At dusk, the thirty something pageant wagons arrived, laden with music equipment, multicolor neon lights, and costumed children who, following the tradition, showered ecstatic spectators with fistfuls of candies. The Kings' wagons were the last to arrive: in this particular year, 2016, King Balthazar was performed by José Castro Carmona, president of the Sevilla FC soccer club, in blackface, as always. A large number of attendants performed by local volunteers accompanied him, most on foot, some on live white horses, all in dazzling North African white garb, with white cheches on their heads contrasting with the black gloves on their hands, black makeup on their faces, and bright red lipstick applied within the natural contour of their lips. They laughed, danced to the rhythm of the tambourines, struck poses, and, of course, threw candies at the spectators. The cavalcade started at 4.30pm at the University; it was to come full circle at 11pm—it would go on long enough for every Sevillian to catch a glimpse of it. On the previous day, the parade of the Bedouins, *los beduinos,* had been held (Fig.1). Following the local tradition, the day before the Cavalcade of Magi, the royal Herald and his black attendants did a short procession of their own, without the white kings and the children. Hundreds of blackfaced Moors made their way to the city hall through the oldest streets. Channelling old Andalusian fantasies about the Moors, the Moorish Herald went to the City Hall and politely asked the mayor for authorization for the Oriental Kings to enter the city the following day. Sevillians love the black processioners' act so

much that they instituted *los beduinos* parade as a regular warmup for the Calavcade—yet that warmup has really become an anticipated encore, a little extra taste of blackface.

Spanish cities have celebrated the Epiphany with blackface parades such as this one since the middle of the nineteenth century. Although the first Sevillian cavalcade only took place in 1918, to spectators familiar with early modern Spanish culture, it evokes much older traditions of performance, civic processions, and it draws on racial discourses proper to sixteenth and seventeenth century Seville, where Corpus Christi processions regularly featured skits and dances performed in blackface, among other entertainments. Such performances of blackness in early modern Europe are the object of the present dissertation. It goes without saying that seventeenth and twenty-first century blackface performances in the streets of Seville cannot possibly be equated; yet there are ways of establishing a dialogue between these historically separated cultures of racial impersonation while recognizing the specificity of each. It is precisely the specificity of each, the irreducible distance between the early modern and the contemporary moment, that can make a dialogue between them so productive for race scholars. Because of the broken, recursive, and lacunar history that separates (but also links) our moment and the culture of early modern racial impersonation, we can engage early modern culture on terms that are not limited to establishing cause-and-effect or patterns of influence.

This dissertation is based upon the premise that, when it comes to racial impersonation, establishing a productive dialogue across time involves establishing a productive dialogue across space. The Sevillian audience's merry use and perception of blackface as an innocuous community-bonding form of family entertainment that I witnessed in January 2016 would certainly have shocked most of my American readers. There are important differences between Spanish and Anglo-American racial imaginations and sensibilities, and those historically

determined differences constitute the primary object of this dissertation. Yet it is the mixture of difference and similarity between national cultures and historical moments that is of interest to me. Thus, it is also my goal to underline the commonalities between those nationally defined racial imaginations in the formative moment that was the early modern period. It is my goal to underline, for instance, the fact that blackface was widely used throughout early modern continental Europe. Long before the development of American minstrelsy, it consolidated, in early modern Spain, into multimodal skit performances combining cosmetics, black accent and speech patterns, comedy, and black dances. By bringing this forgotten history of a European racial impersonation culture to the fore, I hope to undo the myth of Anglo-American exceptionalism that has so far enabled Anglo-Americans to think of their own racial impersonation genealogy in isolationist ways, and Europeans to ignore the long history of racist representations that resurfaces in contemporary performances such as the *cabalgata de reyes*.[1] Writing a new history of racial impersonation in early modern Europe is thus not just an antiquarian exercise: revealing the ideological substratum of racial impersonation techniques when they first appeared in the early modern period might change the way we think about those techniques across the Atlantic today and affect future developments in the ongoing history of racial impersonation.[2]

[1] This myth manifests in contemporary France for instance, when some interpret the offense taken at blackface performances as an importation of American sensibilities to Europe, that is, as a form of cultural imperialism. "It is in the name of the Americanness of blackface's history that all the French people who do blackface today don't feel guilty . . . this excuse recurs on the social media and in the media: how could that racist tradition from nineteenth century America be racist in France too? For Alain Korkos from [political media analysis TV show] *Arrêt sur Images*, Jeanne Deroo . . . should have ignored the American media that seek to impose upon us the shameful history of their own country." (Amétis) In the Netherlands, the controversy surrounding the traditional character of Zwarte Piet, Saint Nicholas' blackfaced servant in traditional public celebrations, has taken similar contours.

[2] The link between race-inflected early modern performance culture and the present is the object of Joseph Roach's ground-breaking monograph *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance.* Columbia University Press: 1996. "What I am calling the circum-Atlantic world was itself a vast behavioral vortex, the forces of which created certain patterns that continue to influence values and practices still extant today" (Roach 30).

2) The Power of Performance

This dissertation considers how the racialization of blackness, a major epistemological shift that began to take hold at the end of the sixteenth century and from which we are still trying to extricate ourselves four hundred years later, was absorbed into early modern European popular culture. In its simplest articulation, it argues that the various techniques of racial impersonation used by white actors when they performed black characters in various loci of European performance culture effected ideological work, leading spectators to think of black Afro-diasporic people as belonging naturally at the bottom of the social order. Looking beyond the rhetorical and dramatic strategies used by playwrights to create black characters, it brings the ideological work inherent in *performance* to the fore. Racializing black characters in more than one mode (the performative in addition to the literary), theatre was, I argue, a privileged site for racial formation in early modern Europe.

To develop this claim, I must first define two of the key terms of this project in line with the formulations and analyses produced in the field of Critical Race Studies: "race" and "racialize." Race is a system of power packaged as system of knowledge. Race is what happens when a dominant group selects a population group on the basis of a criterion that can but does not have to be physiological, and defines that criterion as an essential hereditary quality that justifies the positioning of the target population group at the bottom of the social order. Michael Omi and Howard Winant's definition of racial formation, although formulated in relation to American culture, has a transhistorical and transnational scope: racial formation is used "to refer to the process by which social, economic and political forces determine the content and importance of racial categories and by which they are in turn shaped by racial meaning" (Omi

and Winant, *Racial Formation* 61). Geraldine Heng, who uses CRT to read medieval texts, reformulates more clearly: for her, race is "a tendency of the gravest import to demarcate human beings through differences among humans that are selectively essentialized as absolute and fundamental, in order to distribute positions and powers differentially to human groups . . . Race is a structural relationship for the articulation and management of human differences, rather than a substantive content" (Heng 324). Similarly, for Stuart Hall, who uses CRT to read the media, racial discourse "gives legibility to a social system in which it operates . . . and through that reading it organizes, regulates, and gives meaning to social practices through the distribution of symbolic and material resources between different groups and the establishment of racial hierarchies" (S. Hall, "Subjects" 290). In that sense, as Omi and Winant put it, racialization is a term we use "to signify the extension of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified relationship, group, or social practice" (Omi and Winant, "Racial Formations" 18). Understood as such, race can, as early modern scholars often insist, refer to something different at different points in time, while its social function remains stable across time. Emphasizing the purpose of race and racialization allows us to break away from what Ian Smith calls "the terminological obsession" that informs attempts at relegating the invention of race to the post-Restoration era, and "obscures race's strategic, opportunistic, negotiating purpose" (Smith, *Barbarian Errors* 12). In other words, race is not the same thing in the fifteenth and in the twenty-first centuries, or in Spain and in India, but it *does* the same thing (hierarchizing difference in the service of power).

Until the end of the sixteenth century, in Europe, the term race referred primarily to degree, or rank, and to religion, as those were the criteria on the basis on which the dominant groups devised a system of power and resource distribution. In France, as Guillaume Aubert writes, "the idea of race rapidly became an essential feature of the early modern French ethos,"

as the old military aristocracy, the *noblesse d'épée*, had a strong impetus to devise an ideological apparatus to prevent the new aristocracy, the *noblesse de robe*, appointed by the king, from encroaching upon their inherited privileges (Aubert 443). Across the Channel, this system corresponded to what Jean E. Feerick describes as the "race-as-blood" system that was dominant in late sixteenth-century England (Feerick 6). According to Ivan Hannaford, within that racial paradigm, which obtained across the Channel and beyond, "to belong to a race was to belong to a family with a valorous ancestry and a profession of public service and virtue" (Hannaford 175). In Spain, the religious paradigm was stronger: since the promulgation of the statuses on the *limpieza de sangre* (starting in 1449), blood had been used as a tool to racialize religious difference (Judaism and Islam), which came to be imagined as hereditary.[3] As these different cases illustrate, race is a matrix: it can produce new paradigms (race-as-degree, race-as-religion) without shedding old ones. At the end of the sixteenth century, the matrix produced yet a new paradigm, as race came to also refer to physiological differences for which color quickly became a shorthand. Blackness was racialized in that sense, and the emergent paradigm of race-as-color joined the dominant paradigms of race-as-degree and race-as-religion within the early modern European racial matrix.

That epistemological shift was brought about by the same economic incentives to which the development of color-based slavery responded. The formulation of race that CRT has produced and that I use goes beyond the worn-out "origins debate" that has long divided

[3] The racialization of religion through the symbol of blood, imagined since the late Middle Ages to be able to pass on religion from one generation to the next, has been extensively studied. The most illuminating works on the subject include Gil Anidjar. *Blood, A Critique of Christianity*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2014; Frédéric Schaub. "Between Genealogy and Physicality: A Historiographical Perspective on Race in the Ancien Régime." *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal*, vol. 35, no.1, 2014, pp. 23-51; and David Nirenberg. "Race and the Middle Ages." *Rereading the Black Legend: The Discourses of Racism in the Renaissance Empires*. University of Chicago Press, 2007, pp. 71-87.

historians as to whether racism preceded slavery or vice-versa in the Atlantic world.[4] Once we understand race as a discourse that serves to justify the unequal distribution of resources and power in a given society, the terms of the debate change, and its focus shifts to the varied and specific economic, political, and social motivations that led Europeans across the Atlantic to racialize black Afro-diasporic people at different moments in the early modern period.[5] I leave the exploration of those motivations to historians, however, for the goal of my dissertation is to understand how early modern Europeans came to accept and internalize that epistemological shift. It is my contention that the ideological diffusion of blackness as a racial category was largely effected through one of the most important media of the time: theatrical performance.

Although much interesting scholarly work has been devoted to studying the racialization of blackness in early modern theatre by focusing on individual plots, psychology, and typologies of black characters, this dissertation attempts something different by focusing on racial impersonation techniques.[6] In particular, I study three performance techniques that were often, but not always, used simultaneously: blackface, blackspeak (a comic imaginary black accent in vernacular European languages), and black dances. This dissertation thus focuses on how early

[4] Alden T. Vaughan, who, himself, believes racism to have preceded the development of slavery in America, recapitulates that debate in "The Origins Debate: Slavery and Racism in Seventeenth-Century Virginia." *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. 97, no. 3, 1989, pp. 311-354. The major voice in this debate is generally considered to be that of Winthrop D. Jordan. Jordan authoritatively argued that the exact order of appearance cannot be determined for sure, but that slavery and racism mutually reinforced each other in *White Over Black: American Attitudes Towards the Negro, 1550-1812*. New York: Norton, 1968.

[5] This approach informs recent studies of racialization, such as Jerome Branche's *Colonialism and Race in Luso-Spanish Literature*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006.

[6] See Anthony Gerard Barthelemy, *Black Face, Maligned Race: the Representation of Blacks in English Drama from Shakespeare to Southerne.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1987; and Eliot Tokson, *The Popular Image of the Black Man in English Drama 1550-1688.* Boston: G.K Hall, 1982. Virginia Mason Vaughan's *Performing Blackness on English Stages, 1500-1800*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005, undoubtedly the most inspiring of those books, combines typological approach with a ground-breaking focus on the materiality of blackface.

modern black characters looked, sounded, and moved in various performance settings. This approach draws on Dympna Callaghan's insight that early modern racial impersonation, taking place at a time when there was no dearth of potential Afro-European performers, was informed, even when it yielded relatively positive visions of black heroes, by the necessity "to produce racial difference and to control it nevertheless" (Callaghan 92). The idea that racial impersonation is always a means of producing and controlling racial difference in early modern England is echoed in Ellen Welch's analysis of the power dynamics at work in early modern French ballets. Welch sees mimesis as a form of conquest: racial impersonation "might be read as a political gesture. The French performer showed himself to be 'master' of the Turk by demonstrating his virtuosic ability to imitate one. Ballets from the time of Louis XIII hinted at this political dimension of cross-cultural performance" (Welch, "Specter" 88). In this dissertation, I extend Welch's point to the impersonation of black Afro-diasporic people. I also heed Callaghan's warning that the positive or negative dimension of black characters is irrelevant to an analysis of power relations, for a black character that is endearing to the audience, either as a comedic clown or as a tragic hero, can still be racialized—as a matter of fact, the history of slavery in the Western world shows how compatible affection for and subjugation of racial others can be. I study the ways in which racial impersonation techniques racialized black characters: the ways in which, playing with early modern spectators' expectations, racial impersonation techniques led spectators to think of black Afro-diasporic people as belonging by nature at a specific place in the social order of metropolitan and incipient Atlantic societies. Racial impersonation culture naturalized multicultural early modern social hierarchies.

Repetitiveness made performance techniques particularly effective for racializing

purposes. Blackface, black accents, and black dances were all conventions of the early modern stage. There were not always used, but more often than not, they were: their use was repetitive, standardized, and expected. It is in that dialectic of repetition on the theatre-makers' part and expectation on the audience's part that racial impersonation techniques saw their racializing effect multiplied. Seeing a single play whose plot and rhetoric suggest that black people might not be intrinsically evil after all was unlikely to have a lasting effect on spectators' racial imaginations. What was likely to impact those imaginations, however, was being regularly reminded that characters performed in blackface were kith and kin with the devil. Repetitive performance techniques defined blackness. Indeed, reading the fashioning of racial identities in light of Judith Butler's notion of performativity, Jonathan Xavier Inda explains that

> The racing of a body is a never-ending process, one that must be reiterated by various authorities and in various times and places in order to sustain the naturalized effect of 'race.' In short, racial performativity is a matter of reiterating the norms through which a racial body is constituted. It is the power of discourse to bring about what it names through the citation of repetitive norms. (Inda 88)

On stage, the repetitive use of blackface, blackspeak, and black dances brought about what it named (blackness): operating as repetitive norms on stage, those performance techniques fixed the meaning of the real-life bodies evoked on stage, thereby helping racial norms crystallize off stage. In short, the ability of early modern racial impersonation techniques to effect ideological work came from the repetitiveness, the citationality, and the expectedness of those techniques.

3) Blackness as a Racial Category: Historical Contexts, Lexicons, and Translations

The racialization of blackness occurred as the black Afro-diasporic population grew in numbers in Iberia and subsequently in the rest of early modern Europe, often radiating from the Iberian Peninsula. Indeed, Iberia had the largest black population in Europe throughout the early modern period. The Portuguese, having established trading posts and *feitorias* all along the Western African coast, changed the traditional dynamics of slave trade in Southern Europe, which was not color-based but religion-based, as they started enslaving black Afro-diasporic people *en masse*, and sold them in the urban port centers of Lisbon and Seville in the middle of the fifteenth century. From those two cities, black slaves spread over the Iberian Peninsula. A 1565 census made black people approximately 13.5% of the total population in Seville, which had the most concentrated black population in Europe. Fernández Alvarez estimates that there were 44,000 slaves in Spain by the end of the sixteenth century (qtd. in Weissbourd, "Transnational Genealogies" 142).

Colonization quickly made the dynamics of slave trade more complex, as Iberians started transporting slaves to their Atlantic colonies in 1501—and that new circuit only involved black Afro-diasporic slaves. Indeed, in a 1543 edict, Charles V expelled from the Spanish colonies "all male and female slaves from Barbary, or Moors recently converted to Catholicism, as well as their children," in order for them not to "infect" the New World, which the Spaniards colonized in the name of the Church, with Islam.[7] Slavery based on religion was thus explicitly ruled out

[7] "*Porque en una tierra nueva, como esa, donde nuevamente se planta la Fe, conviene que se quite toda ocasión porque no se pueda sembrar y publicar en ella la secta de Mahoma, ni otra alguna, en ofensa de Dios Nuestro Señor y perjuicio de nuestra Santa Fe Católica, visto y platicado en el nuestro Consejo de las Indias, fue acordado que debíamos mandar que todos los esclavos y esclavas berberiscos, personas nuevamente convertidos de moros, y sus hijos, como dicho es, que en esas partes hubiere, sean echados de la isla y provincia donde estuvieren y enviados a estos Reinos."* Bibl. Nal., Mss. de América, 3045, flo. 108-109; A.H.N., Códices, t. 693, flo.401-402; Encinas, t. IV, p. 383; Zorita, p. 126; Disp. Complem., vol. I, 210, p. 280 (Qtd. in Lucena Salmoral 662). This is one of the most flagrant examples of how the memory of confrontations with the Moors for control over the Peninsula ruled over the conquest of the Americas. Note that France would follow Spain's lead at the end of the seventeenth century, as the first article of the *Code Noir*, meant to define the conditions of slavery in 1685, serves to expel Jews

in the empire. Such provisions were reiterated throughout the second half of the sixteenth century: the presence of Muslim slaves being *de facto* prohibited in the colonies, Iberians increasingly resorted to pagan slaves, usually from Sub-Saharan Africa and dark-skinned. In other words, those provisions had the effect of developing a color-based form of slavery. Because Seville, with its *Casa de Contratación,* was the heart of the Spanish colonial administration and the home of many prominent slave-owners in the empire, this city became a point of connection between the old and the new slavery systems. Some metropolitan black slaves were sent to the colonies from Seville (although, increasingly, laws were passed to limit the influence that *ladino* slaves, who were familiar with Spanish culture and thus able to navigate it to their own benefit, could have over African slaves).[8] Conversely, seventeenth century plays and *entremeses* increasingly show black slaves from the colonies coming to the metropole.[9] Both in the colonies and in the metropole, the black slave trade intensified in the first decades of the seventeenth century. It is in that context of overall intensification of color-based slavery, increased circulation of black slaves between the metropole and the colonies, and increased exchanges between Spanish and Portuguese cultures (due to the Iberian Union between 1580 and 1640) that Lope de Vega, Tirso de Molina, Calderón, and many others, produced their most memorable black characters for stage performance.

Travel writings circulating in England at the end of the sixteenth century certainly contributed to the development of a general curiosity towards Africans, but they are not the sole

---

from the French Caribbean.

[8] In 1526, the Iberians started importing slaves to the Caribbean directly from Africa (Almeida Mendes 71).

[9] An *entremés* is an interlude, a one-act farce performed between the acts of a *comedia*. It often comments satirically on a theme treated in a serious mode in the *comedia* itself. *Entremeses* were a very important part of the Spanish baroque performance culture, sometimes more important than the *comedias* themselves for the audience.

factor explaining the increased presence of Africans in the discursive sphere at that time. Indeed, while there was no such thing as a regulated slave trade in Tudor England, the black presence developed there in the sixteenth century as a result of diplomatic and commercial exchanges between England and the Iberian Peninsula. Black slaves could be offered as gifts; English merchants such as John Lok, the Gonsons, the Winters, and the Hawkins family participated in the slave trade and brought slaves back home with them; Iberians who settled in London, such as the Portuguese Marrano community, often imported their lifestyle with them, including domestic black slaves. Gustav Ungerer estimates that the black population amounted to 0.5% of the population of London in the 1590s (Ungerer 20). Having reviewed an impressive number of records, Imtiaz Habib argues that, precisely because slavery was not legally recognized in England, black Afro-diasporic people who were smuggled into the country found themselves in a legal limbo that, together with linguistic and cultural alienation, made them vulnerable to the whims of their clandestine buyers. This resulted, for most of them, in lives of "unspoken chattel bondage" (Habib 76). The black presence was nowhere near as important in numbers in England as it was in Spain (and the archives reflect that imbalance), but the black Afro-diasporic population was noticeable enough to cause Queen Elizabeth to issue three edicts of deportation against them in the last few years of the century.[10] As we shall see shortly, it also caused racial lexicons to change in the 1590s, and it led London playwrights to create major black characters in the repertoire, such as Aaron and Othello. The re-chartering in 1618 and 1630 of the Guinea Company (a joint-stock company founded in 1588 that traded slaves among other

[10] Emily Weissbourd has recently argued that those three warrants were less edicts of deportation than documents meant to "authorize the gift of blacks—as commodities—in reward for services rendered" (Weissbourd, "In Their Possession" 2). For Weissbourd, those documents are "evidence for both the presence of enslaved blacks in England and for an emergent discourse in English culture that naturalized the enslavement of black Africans" (Weissbourd, "In Their Possession" 13). Weissbourd's analysis interestingly contradicts the standard interpretation of those royal documents that has informed the early modern race scholarship since the 1970s.

goods) suggests that, in the Stuart age, the English did not lose sight of the profits that this trade could generate. It was eventually replaced with the Company of Royal Adventurers Trading to Africa after the Restoration, and the Royal Africa Company in 1672. That period saw a boom in transatlantic slave trade, due to the development of the labor-intensive cultivation of sugar in Barbados and the Caribbean islands more generally. The influx of literature—dramatic and non-dramatic—addressing black slavery after the Restoration signals the growing importance of blackness in the social, political, and colonial imagination of England in the second half of the century.

The archival work that Imtiaz Habib, Gustav Ungerer, and Rosalyn L. Knutson have done to unearth the black presence in early modern England (largely ignored until the 1980s) has, to this day, no equivalent in France. Even historians who specialize in this question, such as Pierre Boulle, have not studied the black presence in France prior to the middle of the eighteenth century, which makes it virtually impossible at this point to connect extent representations of blackness in print and on stage to the social reality of a black presence in early modern France with any degree of certainty. There might have been such a black presence in France, for there is no reason to believe that France had fewer cultural, diplomatic, and commercial contacts with the slave-trading Iberian Peninsula than England did. At any rate, Nicolas Médievelle has shown that there had been regular contacts between Rouen merchants and the West coast of Africa in the second quarter of the sixteenth century, when French merchants tried to breach the Portuguese monopoly over the region.[11] The merchants brought back *malagueta* spice to be sold on the

[11] Médievelle notes that Africa did not inspire the same craze for travel literature in France that Brazil would inspire a few decades later. Nonetheless, we do have a text written by the captain-trader-pirate Jean Alfonse de Saintonge (who was most likely born a Portuguese) documenting his travels around the world, including "Africa, Aethiopia, and Guinea": *Les Voyages auantureux du capitaine Ian Alfonce, Sainctongeois*. Médievelle reads this text in conversation with the Norman *Vallard* Atlas (1547), whose illustrations depict Africans from the region of *Guinea*

Rouen market in Normandy—is this the only type of commodity that they smuggled from a region that had a ready infrastructure for selling slaves to Europeans? Perhaps. There might or there might not have been a black Afro-diasporic population in early modern France: in the current state of scholarship on the subject, one cannot rule out either possibility. But even if we assume, conservatively, that there was no substantial black presence in France at the beginning of the seventeenth century, there were many representations of black people in early modern France, and we can read those representations in light of the ideas proposed by Allison Blakely who, in his study of black representations in early modern Dutch culture, argues that "the existence of color prejudice in a predominantly 'white' society does not require the presence of racial conflict or even of a significant colored population" (qtd. in K. Hall, *Darkness* 14).

In that perspective, the mechanisms through which France came to develop an interest in black Africans can be compared to the mechanisms through which Germany developed colonial fantasies about South America in the early modern period, centuries before it had any colony of its own, according Susanne Zantop.[12] Zantop underlines the importance of the Black Legend in the formation of a German colonial sensibility that imagined German colonization as an ideal mode of colonization contrasting with the Iberian experience. Zantop shows the importance of Las Casas' *Brevíssima relacíon de la destruycion de las Indias* in German colonial fantasy writings, and emphasizes the impact of Las Casas' (temporary) support of the enslavement of

---

with a striking degree of realism. Médievelle underlines the fact that most of the documentations used to create the Vallard Atlas was Iberian, and he calls those documents "Luso-French" (Médievelle 27-28).

[12] Zantop uses the term "colonial fantasies" to "highlight two important aspects of those colonialist stories: their purely imaginary wish-fulfilling nature, and their unconscious subtext, which links sexual desire of the other with desire for power and control" (Zantop 3). I borrow this term from Zantop, as the reasons why the term applies to German's colonial imaginination render it applicable to early seventeenth century French racial imagination.

black Africans onto non-Iberian colonial fantasies.[13] Similarly, I would argue that early seventeenth century France—a country that was also getting into the race to colonization fairly late due to the crippling effect of the wars of religion which lasted until the end of the sixteenth century—understood Atlantic expansion through the lens of the Iberian experience, which had involved mass color-based slavery for over a century and half. Early seventeenth century textual and performative representations of blackness in the French archives certainly seem, as we shall see shortly, to be looking at Iberian racial cultures.

The question of blackness probably became more urgent later in the century. In the 1620s, Cardinal Richelieu espoused the colonial project—until then timidly budding—in order to give France pre-eminence among European nations, and he did so by chartering private companies modeled after the English and Dutch joint stock companies. Those included *La compagnie Rouennaise du Cap du Nord*, which traded with continental America, *La compagnie du Cap Vert et du Sénégal,* which traded with West Africa, and *La Compagnie de St Christophe* (in 1626), which traded with the Caribbean. The importation of black Afro-diasporic slaves to the French Caribbean started just a few years later, and some seem to have found their way to metropolitan France. Indeed, in 1645-1648, Mathieu Le Nain could paint a domestic scene of "Dance Lesson" in which French little girls learnt to dance to the tune of a black violin player. The slave trade remained small, however, until the 1660s, when the shift from tobacco to sugar cultivation caused a boom in black slavery in the Francophone world. Between 1660 and 1684, the number of slaves in Guadeloupe and Martinique increased from 7,000 to 17,000. Several laws were passed to regulate interracial unions and to preserve the color line as the foundation of

[13] She mentions, for instance, that a writer like Johann Jakob Becher "like Las Casas, includes black slavery as part of his colonial setup on account of the Africans' greater propensity for hard labor" in 1669 (Zantop 24).

colonial French societies. Iberian and the English archives of plays and lawsuits teach us that when slavery booms in the colonies, inevitably so, the black presence also increases in the metropole—there is no reason why France should have been an exception to the rule.

The increasing presence of a black Afro-diasporic population throughout the early modern period in European and Altantic societies translated into the increasing presence of blackness in various discursive fields (religion, medicine, and ethnology, for instance). One such field in particular, lexicography, reflects the emergence of blackness as an independent category. Indeed, a glance at the lexicons used by early modern Spaniards, Frenchmen, and Englishmen at the beginning of the seventeenth century makes it clear that racialization was very much in the air—that early modern Europeans were starting to think of blackness as the basis for a new identity category distinct from the older paradigms that had so far defined categories of sameness and difference. The lexicographic approach also shows that some Europeans thought of blackness as an identity category *per se* quite forcefully, and others more tentatively.

It is in Iberia that the new racial category emerged most forcefully at the beginning of the century. In *El Tesoro de la lengua castellana* (1611), lexicographer Sebastián de Covarrubias defines a *negro* as "an Aethiop whose color is black" [*Negro: el Etiope de color negra*] (Covarrubias 562). In that respect, *negros* differed from *moros*. Indeed, Covarrubias defines the color tawny [*morena*] as follows: "color that is not completely black—like the color of the *moros*, whence the name of the color" [*color la que no es del todo negra, como la de los moros, de donde tomó nombre*] (Covarrubias 555). Covarrubias' definition of *moros* is strikingly short, which suggests that early modern Spaniards did not need to consult a dictionary to know what a *moro* was, given the ubiquity of that identity category in the national imagination, a category quintessentially defined by religious difference, the observance of Islam. This specification being

unnecessary for his readers, Covarrubias defines the group based on geographic origin: "people from the province of Mauritania" [*asi de la provincia de Mauritania*] (Covarrubias 556). *Negros* have a different geographic origin, for *Guinea* is defined as "the land of the *negros*, or Ethiops, in Africa, where the Portuguese hire" or, to drop the unsavory euphemism, enslave people [*la tierra de los negros, o Etiopes en Africa a donde contratan los Portugueses*] (Covarrubias 457). In Covarrubias' rendition of early seventeenth century Spanish racial lexicon, there was a group of people who were etymologically defined by their blackness (*negros*), who were often subjected to slavery, and who were distinct from North Africans (*moros*), both in terms of geographic provenance and skin color. Now, of course there were at the time, as there are now, people who belonged to both categories at the same time—*moros* whose skin was darker than tawny, and *negros* who were Muslims—but those people are hardly ever represented on stage in the theatre of the *siglo de oro*, which attests to the role of theatre in constructing blackness as an independent identity category.[14] In Spain, various sites of knowledge-production, such as dictionaries and theatres, functioned in synchrony to develop blackness as an identity category that, like any other category, could intersect with other categories, but could stand on its own.

In early modern France and England, sites of knowledge-production did not function in synchrony with each other, as vernacular lexicons show some degree of belatedness compared to the stage. The French racial lexicon was ambiguous at the beginning of the seventeenth century. In his *Thrésor de la langue francoyse, tant ancienne que moderne* (published in 1606 but developed since the 1570s), Jean Nicot defines a *More* as follows:

[14] There is, to the best of my knowledge, only one exception to this rule—one black *moro* to be found in the theatre of the *Siglo de Oro*, that is the character of Cañeri in *La comedia famosa de Juan Latino,* by Diego Ximénez de Enciso, 1652 (see Chapter 2). Cañeri is defined in the dramatis personae as a "*moro negro*" dressed with animal skins. He is the fantasmatic embodiment of Moorishness who tempts the white Morisco Don Fernando de Valor into rebelling against the Spanish King's authority during the Rebellion of the Alpujarras (1568-1671), in response to the measures taken by the crown to enforce a cultural genocide.

> Properly speaking, a *More* is man or a woman from the province of Mauritania in Africa. *Maurus, Maurusius*. Spaniards and Italians also say *Moro.* A *More* is tawny, or olive, unlike the *Negro* whom we call *More* when we put him on tavern signs. But that is an abuse of the word, because the *Negro*, whom we may call black, is perfectly black in color, usually with a short flat nose, thick lips, pagan, and of gentile creed—he lives in the heartland and on the coast of Africa. By contrast, the *More* is of a tawny color, with a common face, and a Muslim creed. It is because of Islam that the term *More* has been used outside of its initial boundaries and extended to all those who share that faith—except the Turks whom we still call Turks, although they are Muslims. (Nicot 418)[15]

Nicot's definition of a *More* is revealing in several respects. First, it shows us how much early seventeenth century Frenchmen were looking at the Iberian lexicon and culture when it comes to thinking about identity categories and race. Nicot does not define a *Noir* or *Nègre*—those words do not even feature in his dictionary. Rather, he defines a *Negro*: he defines a Spanish word through a French contextual lens. Not surprisingly, Nicot had served as French ambassador in Lisbon, Portugal, from 1559 to 1561. He knew Iberian cultures and languages first hand. This move, Nicot's turn to the Iberian racial lexicon, encapsulates one of the fundamental premise of this dissertation: that racial formation in the early modern period was a transnational phenomenon requiring the circulation of racial tropes and ideas across European borders.

Second, Nicot's definition shows how vague and ambiguous the French lexicon was at the beginning of the seventeenth century, when a *More* could refer indiscriminately to an olive-skinned Muslim North African and to a black-skinned pagan from the heartland of Africa. Stating that it is because any Muslim who is not a Turk gets called a *More*, Nicot suggests that

[15] "*Est proprement celuy ou celle qui sont de la province de Mauritanie en Affrique,* Maurus, Maurusius. *L'Espagnol et l'Italien disent aussi* Moro, *sont de couleur basanée, ou olivastre, differents du Negro, qu'on appelle, et met on pour enseigne aux hostelleries More: Mais c'est abusivement, car le Negro, que nous pouvons appeler noir, est de couleur parfaitement noire, pour le commun camus, et relevé de babines et grosses lèvres, payen et gentil de creance, residant en l'interieur de l'Affrique et en la coste exterieure d'icelle. Là où le More est de couleur tanée, de façon de visage commune, de créance Mahumetiste. Pour raison de laquelle religion Alcorane, le mot de More s'est estendu hors de ses premieres limites, à tous ceux presques qui sont de mesme foy, des Turcs en hors, lesquels retiennent le nom de Turcs, quoy qu'ils soyent Alcoranistes.*" (Nicot 418)

the extension of that term to *negros* was due to the existence of Muslim *negros,* or black Muslims. That ambiguity was to remain in place for quite some time. One year after Nicot's dictionary was published, in 1607, César Oudin's *Trésor des deux langues espagnoles et françoise* would translate the Spanish "*negro de la Guinea"* as "*un nègre, ou More*" in French (Oudin, *Thrésor* 379). In 1636, in his *Invantaire des deux langues françoise et latine*, which translated French words into Latin, Philibert Monet lumped all Africans into one group defined by its dark skin tone, regardless of geographic origin: "*Nègres*, all kinds of *Mores* and Ethiops wherever they come from [*Nègres, toutes sortes de Maures et Ethiopiens, de quell terroir que ce soit*]: Ethiops, *Nègres*, people with black skin, people with dark skin [*hic Aethiopes, um. hi Nigri,orum. Nigra cute populi. Pullo colore gentes*]" (Monet 589). Finally, in 1690, in his *Dictionnaire universel*, Antoine Furetière writes that "Mores have a black face" [*les Mores ont le visage noir*] (Furetière 732). Throughout the seventeenth century then, the French lexicon generally kept conflating North and Subsaharan Africans under the Muslim *More* label, and defined *Mores* as black.[16]

Nicot's *More* entry, however, constitutes an exception in seventeenth century French dictionaries, in that it betrays a clear impatience towards the vagueness and ambiguity that would characterize the word *More* in popular use throughout the century. Calling the *negros* on tavern signs *Mores* is a clear "abuse of the word," according to him. Nicot's emphatic comment suggests that vagueness and ambiguity did not characterize everybody's perception of African

[16] Here, I disagree with Valensi and Delesalle when they argue that the term *Nègre* does not appear in French dictionaries prior to 1671. I agree with them, however, that early seventeenth century dictionaries were shaped by ideological forces. According to them, the absence of *Nègre* from seventeenth century dictionaries was not innocent: "it is an act of censorship that betrays an embrassment at the existence of *Nègres* as people and as slaves" (Delesalle and Valensi 84). Again, the word *Nègre* does feature in early seventeenth century dictionaries, but it could be argued that the conflation I am observing in those dictionaries between *Nègre* et *More* had the effect of hiding the connection between *Nègre* and slavery in ways that are germane to the lexicographic processes of silencing described by Delesalle and Valensi.

identities in early modern France. In the conceptual archetypes that Nicot's definition of *More* forges and wields, a *negro* is a "pagan, of gentile creed"—Muslim *negros*, it is implied, are thus exceptions to the rule, not the rule. For Nicot, *negros* and *moros* were two distinct categories that remained lexically conflated only because of intellectual blunder and inertia. The first plays of the French corpus analyzed in the dissertation can be read as fulfilling Nicot's desire for an understanding of blackness as a racial category independent from religion. The early modern French stage, as I will show, was a site of knowledge production that, step by step, constructed blackness as an independent racial category. A purely philological approach to early modern racial representations can only see what dictionaries capture: the enduring conflation of all African identities under one label in the early modern French lexicon. Yet dictionaries themselves, with Nicot's comment on the "abuse of words," hint at the insufficiency of that approach. Words don't tell the whole story. To see blackness emerge as an independent identity paradigm, we have to turn to a site of knowledge production that could bypass lexical inertia: performance.

Early modern England found itself halfway between Spain and France. In *A Dictionarie in Spanish and English* (1599), which translates Spanish words into English, John Misheu defined a Spanish *moro* as "a blacke Moor of Barbarie or a Neager that followeth the Turkish religion" (Misheu 172). In other words, for Misheu, not all *moros* came from the same part of Africa (not necessarily "Barbarie"), but they were all Muslim, and they all had dark skin. Misheu also defines a Spanish *negro* as "a blacke Moor from Aethiopia" (Misheu 175). Rather than translating, Misheu seems to be *mistranslating* Spanish racial categories into English, ascribing an erroneous geographical origin to *negros* (early modern Spanish *negros* hardly ever came from Ethiopia, they came from *Guinea*, that is West and coastal central Africa), presumably based on

the poetics of etymology (in its etymological sense, Aethiopia is the land of "people with burnt faces"), and conflating what Spaniards would have separated and called, respectively, *moros* and *negros*. In his 1611 *French-English Dictionarie*, Randle Cotgrave, perhaps taking his cue from Jean Nicot's 1606 *Thrésor*, modified the English racial lexicon. He translated a French *More* as "a Moor, Morian, Blackamore," a French *Moresse* as "a Mooress, a woman Moore, a black woman" (Cotgrave 645), and a French "*Nègre*" as "a Negro, a Moor" (Cotgrave 650). Cotgrave's translation of the French racial lexicon suggests that, in his understanding, a Moorish man or woman (Moor, Morian, Mooress) could be black, and a black person (Blackamoor, Negro) could be Moorish—but that they did not have to be, for those two categories were distinct. Here again, it is through the process of translation from other European languages that a national racial lexicon emerges. The move from Misheu's definitions to Cotgrave's definitions is a move from conflation to overlap between the categories of *moro* and *negro*, and that move is part of a larger trend towards the development of blackness as an independent identity category in early modern England. That development also manifests in the coinage of the new term "Blackamoor," which appears as a single word for the first time in print in the 1580s, and booms in the 1590s, as the black population and anti-African sentiment spiked in London. Queen Elizabeth would use the terms "Negars" and "Blackamoors" in the three deportation edicts promulgated at the turn of the century. In short, the English lexicon reached a stage of separation between Moorishness and blackness that was not as advanced as the one we find in the Spanish lexicon, but more advanced than the one we find in the French lexicon. In England too, theatre, whose commercial expansion coincided with the development of the racial lexicon in the 1590s, would be a privileged site of disambiguation, separating blackness and Moorishness into overlapping yet distinct categories.

As those considerations on early modern lexicons suggest, translation has a long fraught relation to race and to racial formation. It is by borrowing, translating, and mistranslating foreign terms that early modern national lexicons of race formed. Observing the life of early modern racial lexicons reveals that racial terms can never be neutrally translated into another language, and that translation brings to light the translator's own conscious or unconscious racial hermeneutics. Which is why, as the last few pages have shown, in this dissertation, I usually abstain from translating racial terms. Whenever I have to translate French and Spanish texts into English, I leave the original racial terms untranslated in italics. My rationale is that using the most obvious translations (such as the English "Negro" for the Spanish *negro* and the French *Nègre* for instance) would be misleading, for "the same words, due to different histories, carry very different connotations and intonations" (Stam and Shohat 58). This dissertation seeks to render simultaneously the untranslatability of nationally defined racial lexicons and sensibilities, and the commonalities between the people subjected to racialization across European borders. To that effect, I have decided, when I analyze quotations and I identify the real life people originally referred to, to relinquish vernacular early modern terminologies, and to use the terms "Afro-diasporic" and "black" instead. Combined, those two terms constitute the lowest common denominator among the many people who suffered from the effect of the racial impersonations that this dissertation analyzes. Those real life people, diverse as they might have been, had two things in common: some connection to Africa and a skin tone richer in melanin than the average European person. "Afro-diasporic" is an umbrella term that has the merit of referring to African people, Afro-European people, and Afro-descendants in the Atlantic world. "Black" is the term indicating most clearly that I am referring to the people that early modern Europeans had started

perceiving as a group endowed with its own melanin-based identity.[17] As Kim F. Hall puts it in the introduction to *Things of Darkness*, the "self-determined cultural identity" of the early modern people who were racialized by the performance techniques that this dissertation focus on is unfortunately but permanently lost to us (K. Hall, *Darkness* 8). Having nothing but the white perceptions of those people to identify them, I resorted to the term "black." It does not mean that I believe actual black skin exists, or that I believe the same skin tones read as black across time and space (I know first hand that they don't),[18] or that I harbor any desire to reify the early modern episteme. It means that I trust my readers to receive and interpret the word "black" when I use it to describe early modern social realities with as much critical distance as they usually receive and interpret the same word in accounts of twenty-first century social realities.

4) Methods and Stakes

Firmly rooted in Cultural Studies, this dissertation draws for tools and methods from the fields of Critical Race Studies, Media Studies, and Comparative Literature. As previously mentioned, Critical Race Studies have produced crucial definitions of the keywords for this dissertation, "race" and "racialization." But my debt extends further. Methodologically, Critical Race Studies show us how to think in terms of systems, and they teach that dismantling a racist system, such as law or performance, requires that we relinquish the notion of individual intention and focus on effects instead. As Richard Delgado recalls,

[17] Affixing the adjectives "non-white" or "of color" to "Afro-diasporic people" will not do, since, in the current state of the racial episteme, Maghrebi people, regardless of their skin tone, do not read as whites in the Western world. Affixing the adjective "Sub-Saharan" to "Afro-diasporic" will not do either, since some Maghrebi people were racialized in the early modern period on the basis on their darker skin tone, not their religion.

[18] As a mixed race Afro-diasporic woman who was never called "*noire*" in France, who is often called "*morena*" in the Dominican Republic, and who reads as "black" in the U.S., I am aware of the instability of the term "black."

> With Brown v. Board of Education, the judicial system moved away from formalism, adopting Justice Harlan's position. The new approach, *which looked not merely to whether a law or practice mentioned race but to its real world effects*, lasted through the sixties and seventies. During this time, the nation adopted affirmative action, which arrived with President Lyndon Johnson's Executive Order 11246 in 1965. Soon a host of federal and state agencies, including schools and universities, followed suit (Delgado, *Critical Race Theory* 115-116). (Emphasis added).

Tackling early modern performance culture as a system and scrutinizing it for its racializing "real world effects" requires moving away from the canonical logic that informs early modern literary studies. A play like *Othello* might have more weight in this dissertation than George Chapman's *The Blind Begger of Alexandria* (1598), but only to the extent that it was performed more often, and thus probably had a bigger impact on audiences—not because it is *Othello*.[19] Treating early modern performance culture like the racist system that it was requires working on little-known materials. Grasping the performative discourse of blackness demands that we engage with the whole archive which is, necessarily so, of uneven literary value.

Critical Race Theory also helps pinpoint the exact role that theatre as a medium plays in interracial power relations. For, as Richard Delgado explains, discursive racism might not be the same as unequal treatment, yet it supports it:

> The attitude-racism then justifies the result: the victim, who is a member of another race, deserved his treatment. Dominant forces, including the media, propagate that attitude. Then groups with little to gain from racial oppression—bystanders, blue-collar workers,

[19] Naturally, as is the case with *Othello*, canonical texts are often canonical because they have an added layer of complexity. In some cases, this added layer of complexity enables plays to resist the hardening of racial regimes, and those cases deserve particular attention (see Chapter 1).

> and the unemployed—join in mindlessly without receiving any real benefit in return. This is the point at which discourse analysis becomes genuinely useful—namely in explaining how those with little stake in racial hierarchy nevertheless participate in it (Delgado, "Two Ways" 2287).

In other words, the racial representations circulated through various media do not create the materials conditions that afflict racialized population groups (economic and institutional pressures do), but they generate ideological support for this unfair system. Delgado suggests that racial representations are designed to rally the support of those who have little to gain from the new system—in the case of early modern Europe, this means lower class Europeans. I argue that early modern theatre, as a mass media, spread an epistemological novelty throughout the strata of early modern European societies, including the lower class that had little to gain from it, and, as such, engaged early modern society as a whole into an emergent color-based racial system.

By thinking about theatre as a media rather than a literary genre, we can study early modern theatre through the lens of what media and cultural theorist Stuart Hall calls a régime of representation, "the whole repertoire and imagery of visual effects through which 'difference' is represented at any one historical moment" (S. Hall, "Spectacle" 232). That repertoire is a system informed by intertextuality, an "accumulation of meanings across different texts, where one image refers to another, or has its meaning altered by being 'read' in the context of other images" (Ibid). On stage, the racializing visual images that Hall metaphorically calls texts are not only visual: they are also auditory, as, besides blackface, we also find blackspeak (the comedic black accent), and black dances that rely on exotic music and hollers. Theatre is a complex media, and Hall's idea that "ideology works by attempting to fix, close, and naturalize the meaning of images" (S. Hall, "Representation and the Media") applies to each of the techniques of racial

impersonation that this dissertation studies. In "Spectacle of the Other," Stuart Hall takes the sixteenth century to be the first of three "major moments when the 'West' encountered black people, giving rise to an avalanche of popular representations based on the marking of racial difference" (S. Hall, "Spectacle" 239). Yet his own analyses only start with readily available visual materials from the second "major moment," the nineteenth century colonization of Africa. By recovering the visual and auditory dimensions of early modern European racial impersonation culture, this dissertation provides a new archive of materials that can open the early modern period for media studies informed by Stuart Hall's approach.

How can such volatile objects be recovered, one might ask? Performance techniques are part of what Diana Taylor calls "the repertoire of embodied practice/knowledge," which, for her, is not as ephemeral as one might think, transmitted as it is through "spoken languages, dance, sports, and rituals" (Taylor 19). However, in this dissertation, which is informed by the methodologies of literary studies, I look for the "repertoire" in its twin, the "archive of supposedly enduring materials (i.e. texts, documents, buildings, bones)" (Taylor 19). The early modern archive certainly does not capture the whole repertoire of racial impersonation, but it gives us a good glimpse—as well as a rich historical context. Stage directions in playtexts, acting companies' receipts, and various testimonies help us reconstruct the looks of blackface and black costumes; playtexts, broadside ballads, and Christmas carols script black accents; dictionaries, stage directions, dance treatises, and woodcuts describe and depict black dances. Thus, I draw on a variety of primary sources to recover ephemeral theatrical performance practices. I examine a large corpus of plays from England, Spain, and France, some well-known and some forgotten: the corpus includes late medieval miracles, mystery plays, *autos*, plays—both long and short—produced for the commercial theatres between 1580 and 1695, as well as ballets and masques

produced at court between 1600 and 1675, and processional dances performed throughout the century. The overwhelming majority of the French and Spanish plays and documents I study have not been translated into English yet (unless mentioned otherwise, all translations are my own), and many have not been reprinted since the seventeenth century. I also mobilize various iconographic documents (woodcuts in playtexts, illuminated manuscripts, engravings, professional paintings, costume sketches), musical documents (broadside ballads, music sheets), treatises (on cosmetics, anatomy, dance, theatre, ethnography), dictionaries, poems, chronicles, travel writings, parish registers, religious edicts, royal decrees, and legal documents (hiring contracts, theatre companies' receipts, and lodged complaints). Ultimately, this dissertation mobilizes a wide array of early modern cultural productions in different capacities in order to reveal how changes in the performance of blackness on stage affected and were affected by changing understandings of the black body's place in the body politic across early modern Western Europe.

There is no doubt that a large part of the repertoire is forever lost to us (although additional findings will surely come to the surface in the future), but the archive is more generous than one might think. The archive is now more accessible than ever, due to the ongoing digitization of early modern materials: systematic targeted word searches through many databases combined with traditional research methods allowed me to constitute the large archive that is the bedrock of this dissertation and that my close readings sample for the reader in illustrative ways. It must be said: this dissertation could not have been written ten years ago.

I have called theatre a "mass media" in the early modern age—this calls for clarification. According to media theorist John Durham Peters, all media, for each communication act that it performs, has contents (message), a channel (means), and communicants (agents). The main

difference between regular media and mass media is that a mass media's channel will have a larger range and duration than a regular media, and, consequently, a larger audience, which troubles the question of reception, as the growing number of receivers increases the number of interpretations of the contents (Durham Peters 267). A face-to-face interaction between two people is an example of regular media, while a Youtube video is an example of mass media. By that account, theatre is a mass media. Its channel being performance, a play (contents) can be performed in many places and over a long stretch of time: repeatability and portability are structural features of theatre and provide the basic business model of the theatre industry. The portability of plays ensures that the number of spectators for a given play can keep growing, multiplying the number of potentially contradictory interpretations for a play. While John Durham Peters never mentions theatre as a mass media (and, indeed, media theorists have, in general, displayed a curious neglect of theatre), theatre was a mass media in the early modern period. Concentrating in large cities that had the infrastructure and the audience necessary for its industry to prosper, theatre was a primarily urban mass media. In that sense, because in early modern Europe, black people lived mostly in urban domestic servitude, the people who were most likely to go to the theatre frequently were the same people who were most likely to encounter black Afro-diasporic people in real life. Representations of black Afro-diasporic people certainly circulated outside of the capital cities when travelling players toured important provincial cities and fairs.[20] The archive, however, reflecting the dynamics of the early modern

[20] On travelling players in early modern England, see Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearian Playing Companies*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996; Siobhan Keenan. *Travelling Players in Shakespeare's England*. New York: Palgrave McMillan, 2002; Sally-Beth MacLean, "Tour Routes: 'Provincial Wanderings' or Traditional Circuits?" *Medieval & Renaissance Drama in England,* vol. 6, 1993, pp. 1-14; as well as the *Records of Early English Drama* volumes http://reed.utoronto.ca/.

print industry, emphasizes plays that were produced in capital cities, and leaves us wondering about potential differences and similarities between representations of blackness in urban theatrical culture and in local provincial theatrical culture in early modern Europe.

Not only was the social make-up of urban commercial theatre audiences diverse, the racial impersonation techniques that this dissertation studies moved between various loci of early modern European performance cultures, increasing the social reach of their racializing discourse. Indeed, blackface, blackspeak, and black dances moved between sites of performance that were restricted to an elite audience (court entertainments such as English masques, French ballets, Spanish *teatro palaciego*, Neapolitan musical interludes), open to anyone with disposable income (commercial theatre in London, Madrid, Rouen, and Paris), and open to anyone because they were entirely free (street theatre accompanying religious processions in Spain, street pageants entering cities such as Edinburgh on the occasion of royal weddings, religious services including carols in blackspeak, and any setting for social dances). Of course, some city-dwellers, those with most capital, who had access to all three kinds of performance sites (courtly, commercial, and free), were more exposed to this discourse than other subjects. And of course, there were disparities in exposure between early modern national cultures in which blackface, blackspeak, and black dance circulated between theatre and other mass media (such as print and religious service in Spain, most exemplarily), and national cultures in which theatre seems to have functioned more in isolation (such as France).[21] Nevertheless, the circulation of blackface,

[21] Spain, England, and France all had a very active print industry specialized in publishing playtexts. For instance, in Spain, between 1604 and 1647, at least 25 collections of plays [*partes*] by Lope de Vega were published, some with several reeditions (García-Luengos 4); in Rouen, France, 172 plays were printed between 1566 and 1640, with roughly 50% of them printed between the key period 1596-1610 (Chevallier Micki 201); and in England, while the popularity of playtexts with readers has lately become an object of contention (see the debate between Blainey and Lesser), according to numbers provided by the English Short Title Catalogue, book publication, which includes playtexts, kept increasing steadily between 1550 and 1630, and boomed in the 1640s. In that sense, theatre was

blackspeak, and black dance between those three types of sites, which together constitute what I call early modern performance culture, ensured that their racializing discourse could reach city-dwellers of all milieus, permeating many strata of early modern European societies.

While it is impossible to measure with certainty the impact that theatrical performances and representations had on playgoers, this dissertation seeks to understand what responses early modern racial impersonation techniques were likely to elicit from their original audiences. I try to reconstruct audience members' responses by making horizontal comparisons as I examine representations of racial difference in other systems of representation such as early modern visual culture, and as I look for characters' responses to racial impersonation of blackness that are embedded in a baroque theatrical culture notorious for its self-reflexivity. I also contextualizie performances within their specific social and historical contexts, and I make vertical or diachronic comparisons as I examine previous iterations of those performance techniques, and as I use modern psychoanalytical theory in some cases. The audience responses to blackface, blackspeak, and black dances that I reconstruct signal early modern theatre's participation in the racialization of blackness—and the term "participation" here is crucial. Indeed, early modern plays must be understood in the context of an epistemological shift that was happening in the real world, but they must not be reduced to mere reflections of that shift. As early modern dictionaries show, that epistemological shift was quite timid, and theatre was instrumental in bringing about its full realization. Theatre played an active role in the diffusion of new interpretive strategies and of the racializing discourse of blackness behind them. The

---

always collaborating with the media of print. The differences I am evoking concern the circulation of racial impersonation techniques between theatre and media other than printed drama.

relation between theatre and reality is a two-way street. Like any true mass media, theatre simultaneously reflected, misrepresented, and transformed early modern social realities.

Finally, this dissertation belongs, perhaps most transparently, in the field of comparative literature. The comparative scope of this dissertation includes early modern England, Spain, and France. The scope of this project is delimitated by practical considerations such as my own linguistic capacities and the genre of the doctoral dissertation; however, the space stretching between those three national poles, England, Spain, and France is not arbitrary, to the extent that it is bound by particularly strong commonalities. Those three countries were major players, allies, and competitors in the development of color-based slavery in the Atlantic world. It is now a commonplace among historians that the development of racism and the development of color-based slavery in the early modern period were mutually constitutive, and that color-based slavery was a transnational practice involving sustained international exchanges between colonial powers. This dissertation thinks about racism along similar lines and shows how the racialization of blackness was a transnational European endeavor. English, French, and Spanish racializing discourses of blackness, while distinct, were intertwined, and as early modern dictionaries suggest, mutually constitutive. The geographical and intellectual space of this dissertation is, to use Robert Stam and Ella Shohat's phrase, "an intercolonial frame" (Stam and Shohat xiv).

The intercolonial development of racial discourses, I argue, favored the emergence of an idea of Europe not only as a Christian unit, but also as a white unit. Feminist scholarship has criticized Benedict Anderson's foundational definition of the nation as "an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" for its (white) masculinist propensities (Anderson 6). Tamar Mayer, for instance, emphasizes the need to integrate gender and race-based power dynamics into studies of nationalism (Mayer 6). English early modern race

studies have answered that call by examining carefully the mutual imbrication of race and gender-based discourses and emergent national discourses of early modern nation-states. Comparative early modern race studies should now extend this reflection at the supranational European level. Etienne Balibar argues that the deadly combination of racial discourses and colonization in the early modern period helped European nations imagine themselves as part of a shared community:

> Anti-Semitism functioned on a European scale: each nationalism saw in the Jew (who was himself contradictorily conceived as both irreducibly inassimilable to others and as cosmopolitan, as a member of an 'original' people and as rootless) its own specific enemy and the representative of all other 'hereditary enemies'; this meant, then, that all nationalisms were defined against the same foil, the same 'stateless other', and this has been a component of the very idea of Europe as the land of 'modern' nation-states or, in other words, of civilization. At the same time, the European or Euro-American nations, locked in a bitter struggle to divide up the world into colonial empires, recognized that they formed a community and shared an 'equality' through that very competition, a community and an equality to which they gave the name 'White' (Balibar 62).

I would add that, because black Afro-diasporic people were at the confluence of racial and colonial concerns and discourses in the early modern period, they too, helped crystallize this sense of a shared white Europeanness between nations such as England, France, and Spain. In that sense comparative early modern race studies speak to the history of European formation.

Comparative early modern race studies are a new field of inquiry. Indeed, the field of early modern race studies, while it has boldly engaged in interdisciplinary ventures by mobilizing visual culture from its earliest days, has remained surprisingly ensconced within the limits of Anglophone archives.[22] To echo Barbara Fuchs' powerful statement: no field is an

[22] See Kim F. Hall's work on racial representations in visual culture in *Things of Darkness: Economics of Race and Gender in Early Modern England*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996; and in "Object into Object?: Some Thoughts on the Presence of Black Women in Early Modern Culture*." Early Modern Visual Culture: Representation, Race, and Empire in Renaissance England*, edited by Peter Erickson and Clark Hulse, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000, pp. 346-377. See also the work of Peter Erickson in "Invisibility Speaks: Servants and Portraits in Early Modern Visual Culture." *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* vol. 9, no.1, 2009, pp. 23-61. See the work of Paul Kaplan, Elizabeth McGrath, Kate Lowe, Joaneath Spicer, Agnes Lugo-Ortiz,

island.[23] Studying the mechanisms through which early modern culture racialized blackness from a comparative angle gives us a chance of understanding a phenomenon that was in itself transnational, and revealing idiosyncrasies that mono-national approaches structurally enshroud.

Transnational studies are a subfield of Comparative Literature. While comparative literature is "the study of literature written in more than one language usually in order to identify commonalities, differences, and points of contact," transnational studies correspond to what Sharon Marcus calls "intersectionist" approaches to comparative literature: "intersectionists focus on concrete interactions between national literatures, studying influences, circulations, reprints, and translations, to show how literary developments depends on transnational contacts" (Marcus 137). In the early modern period, a transnational approach can only apply to small set of materials, for only in rare cases can we trace the direct influence of one national unit (performance technique, hermeneutic configuration, lexeme, playtext) over a unit from a different nation. And yet, similar things, different in their sameness, happen in different places across a relatively short timespan. I argue that these intersecting currents evidence a multi-directional circulation of racial concepts, performance techniques, and racialized theatergrams in early modern Europe.[24] In that sense, when direct influence cannot be established, I fall back on

---

and the monumental collection edited by David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates Jr. *The Image of the Black in Western Art, Volume III*, Parts 1-3. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010-11.

[23] Barbara Fuchs. "No Field Is an Island: Postcolonial and Transnational Approaches to Early Modern Drama," *Renaissance Drama*, vol. 40, no.1, 2012, pp. 125-133. Barbara Fuchs's own subfield of Anglo-Spanish cultural relations has been energized by figures such as Eric Griffin, and, most recently, Emily Weissbourd, whose dissertation will shortly be published as a monograph. My dissertation is part of this movement.

[24] Louise Clubb defines "theatergrams" as "streamlined structures for svelte playmaking, and elements of high specific density, weighty wih significance from previous incarnations . . . [There are] theatregrams of persons (stock characters), theatregrams of association (specific pairings of characters), theatregrams of motion (actions and reactions with apposite speech and parts of the set for hiding, meeting, attack, defense, seduction, deceit, and so forth), all of which produce variations of plot and character united in theatergrams of design, patterns of meaning expressed by a disposition of material reciprocally organizing the whole comedy and the spectator's perception of its form." (Clubb 21)

the larger framework of comparative literature. That is to say, I bring the questions that have been developed in English early modern race studies during the last thirty years to bear on early modern French and Spanish materials that have hardly been studied under this angle, and, reversely, I use my findings on early modern French and Spanish racial cultures to shed a new light on English early modern racial culture.

More evidence of direct transnational influence will probably come to light in the future (studying travelling companies' repertoires or international patterns of book circulation might be a productive avenue of inquiry), but even so, given the fundamentally lacunar nature of the early modern archive, the comparative approach will likely remain the operative framework, and multidirectional circulation will most likely remain the dominant model for organizing the findings yielded by comparative early modern race studies. Comparative early modern race studies spiked with exciting transnational moments is, in the present state of the archive, a productive way of working towards developing, within early modern studies, a branch of what David Theo Goldberg calls "relational race studies, that is, an ideal approach to race in several national contexts that "signals how state formations or histories, logics of oppression and exploitation are linked, whether causally, or symbolically, ideationally, or semantically" (Goldberg 361), an account that "connects materially and affectively, causally, and implicatively" (Goldberg 362).

Doing comparative early modern race studies does not consist in collating already existing knowledge disseminated in various fields: it means generating findings. Blackness has hardly been studied as an independent paradigm of difference in the theatre of the *Siglo de Oro* yet, mostly because scholars of Spanish theatre have traditionally focused on religion as the

dominant paradigm of difference in Iberia, inherited from the medieval period. Building upon the pioneering work done by Baltasar Fra-Molinero and, more recently, by John Beusterien, Aurelia Martín-Casares, and Emily Weissbourd, this dissertation shows how race slowly but surely started dissociating itself from religion as a racial paradigm in early seventeenth century Spanish theatre.[25] Even more strikingly, while the representation of Afro-diasporic people in fiction and drama has recently been studied in the eighteenth century, an entire corpus of earlier French drama has been overlooked.[26] Studies of race in early modern France, focusing on a rich production of *récits de voyage*, ethnography, and anatomy treatises, have overlooked theatrical productions. This omission has reinforced the prevailing assumption that slaves and black Africans were absent from the stage prior to the eighteenth century. Christian Biet, Sylvie Chalaye, and Toby Wikström have recently started expanding the archive and looking at the early modern intersections of race and theatre; my dissertation is indebted to their work and suggests that focusing on performance can now bring this exciting line of inquiry further.[27]

---

[25] See Baltasar Fra-Molinero. *La imagen de los negros en el teatro del Siglo de Oro*. Madrid: SIGLO XXI DE ESPANA EDITORES, S.A. 1995; John Beusterien. *An Eye on Race: Perspectives from Theater in Imperial Spain*. Associated University Press, 2006; Emily Weissbourd. "Transnational Genealogies: Jews, Blacks and Moors in Early Modern English and Spanish Literature"*, 1547-1642*. Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2011; Aurelia Martín-Casares and Marga G. Barranco. "The Musical Legacy of Black Africans in Spain: A Review of our Sources." *Anthropological Notebooks*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2009, pp. 51-60; and "Popular Literary Depictions of Black African Weddings in Early Modern Spain." *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme*, vol. 31, no. 2, 2008, pp. 107-121.

[26] Studies of eighteenth century representations of Afro-diasporic people include: Madeleine Dobie. *Trading Places: Colonization and Slavery in Eighteenth-Century French Culture.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010; Doris Garraway. *The Libertine Colony: Creolization in the Early French Caribbean*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005; Youmna Charara, ed. *Fictions coloniales du XVIIIe siècle*. Paris: Harmattan, 2005; and Doris Y. Kadish. *Fathers, Daughters, and Slaves: Women Writers and French Colonial Slavery*. Liverpool University Press, 2012.

[27] See Christian Biet. ed. *Théâtre de la cruauté et récits sanglants en France (XVIe-XVIIe siècle).* Paris: Editions Robert Laffont, 2006; Sylvie Chalaye. *Du Noir au Nègre: L'image du Noir au théâtre (1550-1960).* Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998; Toby Wikström. *Law, Conquest and Slavery on the French Stage, 1598-1685*. Dissertation, Columbia University, 2010.

The omission of theatre from early modern race studies is due in part to the fragmentary nature of the French early modern theatre archive, which (just like Spanish theatre) has not yet fully benefitted from the systematic recuperation, digitization, and indexation that databases such as Early English Books Online provide for early modern English theatre.[28] I would argue however, that this omission is also due, at least in part, to what Doris Garraway calls "historical abjection," the silencing of colonial slavery in French historiography that started during the Enlightenment, and must have influenced the constitution of what we have come to know as the canon of classical French theatre (Garraway 3). Because the early modern period saw the rise of nation-state formation and a literary Golden Age in several European countries, including France, England, and Spain, the canon of early modern theatre plays a special role when those countries reflect upon their identity and history today. It is the starting point where collective imagination, reflected in syllabi and cultural politics, begins to define ideas of national identity in those parts of Europe. I seek to open up those ideas by locating a black presence in English, French, and Spanish cultures at that time, and by showing that multiculturalism and interracial negotiations have always been part of European identity. This work matters to me as a European woman of color, and it is urgent at a time when Europe, confronted with the migrant crisis, terrorism, and rising far-right parties, seems more and more prone to closing its borders and isolating itself in nostalgic fantasies of identitarian monoculturalism.

[28] It should be pointed out, however, that although the resources deployed around such projects do not remotely compare with those that powered a project like EEBO, digital databases for French and Spanish materials are going through a promising phase of expansion. Currently, available databases for studying early modern theatre include www.Gallica.bnf.fr (Bibliothèque Nationale de France), www.theatre-classique.fr, http://bibdramatique.paris-sorbonne.fr, and www.cesar.org.uk/cesar2/home.php. Available databases for studying early modern Spanish theatre include http://catalogo.bne.es/uhtbin/webcat (Biblioteca Nacional de España), www.teso.chadwyck.com/ (Teatro Español del Siglo de Oro), and http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/ (Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes).

5) Outline

The dissertation is largely organized by performance technique. The first two chapters provide a prolonged analysis of the hermeneutic configurations of blackface in England, France, and Spain, of their evolution in various directions, and of their racializing effects, while the third and fourth chapters focus on blackspeak and black dances respectively.

Chapter 1, "The Devil and the City: Blackface across the Channel" analyzes the discourses articulated through blackface about the possible or impossible integration of Afro-diasporic people into English and French early modern societies. It first takes stock of the legacy of medieval performance culture that early modern England, France, and Spain had in common. In European medieval performance culture, blackface was used to represent the Devil, and when commercial theatre seized upon this technique to represent black Afro-diasporic characters, playwrights often used strategic cues to reactivate the older associations of blackface, conveying to audiences the idea that black Afro-diasporic people were kin with the Devil. My approach differs from previous studies of the diabolical connotations of early modern blackface by reckoning not only with the moral dimension of diabolization, but also with the social and political message that it conveyed. Because the Devil was the Enemy, associating black Afro-diasporic people with him suggested that those people could not be woven into the fabric of Christian European societies. My first two chapters trace the itineraries of English, French, and Spanish blackface as they drifted away from that common medieval paradigm.

Both in England and France, the 1600s saw a shift in the hermeneutics of blackface: that shift hinged on a crucial reconfiguration of the relation between blackface and religious epistemes. In England, although the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface remained operative throughout the early modern period, plays such as *Othello* (1604) and *The White Devil* (1612)

show antagonistic white characters deploying the rhetoric of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface around Christian black characters that have nothing diabolical about them, in order to maintain those black characters either outside or at the bottom of the social order. Doing so, they draw attention to the ease with which the religious discourse of diabolism could be manipulated for a variety of (often dubious) purposes both on stage and off stage. In a context of social changes as the Afro-British population was growing, some plays put pressure on the hermeneutics of blackface that were so popular on stage, and they suggested to spectators that the religious semiotics manifesting in the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface obfuscated non-religious aspects of the issue of black integration, such as color prejudice, class, and gender.

In proto-colonial France, the shift from the traditional religious hermeneutic configuration of blackface to a secular hermeneutic configuration in the late 1620s reflects a shift in conversations from the possibility of integrating black Afro-diasporic people into an imagined future French society, to conversations about the modalities of that integration once Richelieu embraced the colonial agenda. Indeed, in Rouen—a platform for Anglo-French exchanges, and a city that had the Atlantic on its mind early on—plays such as *La Tragédie françoise du More cruel* (1613) and *Les Portugaiz infortunez* (1608) mobilized the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface to discourage attempts at integrating black Afro-diasporic people into the future transoceanic body politic. Yet, twenty years later, court ballets secularized blackface: associating it with the fire of lust and with black Afro-diasporic characters' enthusiastic erotic submission to French aristocratic ladies in the audience, court ballets had blackface code the subjugation and enslavement of Africans in the French Atlantic world in a celebratory mode.

In the second chapter, "'A Pearl and a Bitch': Blackface in Spain," I show that, in Spain, it is the support that the Catholic Church itself provided to the integration of Afro-diasporic

people into the body politic, both metropolitan and colonial, at the end of the sixteenth century that allowed blackface to relinquish its medieval religious configuration. The Catholic Church had a long history of weighing in on racial affairs, to the extent that, in addition to weighing in on the treatment of *moriscos* and *conversos* in metropolitan Spain, it had played a crucial role in prohibiting the enslavement of Indians and promoting their conversion to Christianity in the Atlantic world. At the end of the sixteenth century, black Afro-diasporic people too became an object of concern for the Church. Prominent Catholic figures such as Alonso de Sandoval promoted the idea that non-Muslim Afro-diasporic people belonged potentially in the Spanish Catholic world order, and I argue that this religious discourse, prompted by political and economic imperatives, accounts to a large extent for the gradual disappearance of the diabolical hermeneutic of blackface in Spanish theatre at the end of the sixteenth century.

The new hermeneutic configuration that emerges in the 1590s, particularly palpable in the plays of Lope de Vega, constitutes what I call a commodifying hermeneutics. By deploying a dense rhetorical net of comparisons, puns, and metaphors that associate black(ened) skin with precious black wares, this new hermeneutic configuration of blackface conceptually turned black skin into a commodity, suggesting that Afro-diasporic people belonged in Spanish colonial societies, but as commodities, that is, as slaves. This hermeneutic reconfiguration of blackface provided ideological support to the practice of slavery.[29] The commodifying hermeneutics of

[29] Ian Smith has recently argued that Shakespeare's evocation of the textile technology that was used prior to cosmetic blackface through the trope of the black handkerchief in *Othello* is designed to evoke blackness as a property, as opposed to cosmetic blackface, which is informed by the religious dynamics I have previously described. In that sense, for Smith, textile blackface is more apt to capture the inscription of black bodies in the capitalist economy of slavery than cosmetic blackface (Smith, "Handkerchief" 24). This is a good occasion to appreciate what insights a comparative perspective might afford to early modern race scholars: the hermeneutic configuration of blackface in early modern Spain that I retrace undermines the dichotomy that Smith posits. Cosmetic blackface could trope blackness as a property just as effectively as textile blackface, and, quantitatively speaking, it did it much more often than textile blackface in Shakespeare's Europe.

blackface developed by Lope de Vega was imitated and parodied by the most important Spanish playwrights in the decades that followed, which evidences the long-lasting influence of that paradigm. Finally, in this chapter, I study the racial impersonation of characters found only in Iberian theatre culture: *mulato* characters. I show that representing those Afro-diasporic people posed technical difficulties to theatre-makers who inherited an apparatus of racial impersonation predicated on a strong black/white binary. I show that failed dramaturgic engagements with *mulato* representation echo doomed contemporary attempts to classify the increasingly hybrid colonial Spanish body politic, and they reflect anxieties concerning the question of those racially hybrid Spaniards' place in the Spanish social order.

In the third chapter, "Blackspeak: Accenting Race in Early Modern Theatre," I analyze the racializing effect of the racial impersonation technique I call blackspeak (a caricatural African accent) and its spread from the Iberian Peninsula to the rest of Europe. Born in Portuguese culture in the 1520s, blackspeak developed in Spanish theatrical and musical culture (in Christmas carols, for instance) in the 1530s in the parts of the country that had an important black population. It later boomed in commercial theatre in the first decades of the seventeenth century, in the comedic work of major and minor playwrights alike. I use Freud's formulation of the Superiority Theory of laughter to show that, at an automatic, perhaps preconscious level, blackspeak led audiences to perceive Africans as excessively physical and insufficiently intellectual. In slavery-based societies, this construction, associating Afro-diasporic people with excessive physicality, provided ideological support to the various forms of physical exploitation to which they were subjected, while their association with deficient intellect and childishness conveniently reinforced the idea that white people had a moral mandate to educate them. As

Frantz Fanon puts it: "To speak in *petit nègre* is to say the following: you, stay in your place."[30]

Throughout Europe, blackspeak thrived when theatre-makers and consumers lived within earshot of black speakers: via the musical genre of *moresche* songs, blackspeak spread to Naples, to Munich, and I argue that Richard Brome's *The English Moor* (1637) might very well have been an attempt at Anglicizing this continental racial impersonation technique at a time when the black population in Caroline London kept growing. I argue that Brome's blackspeak scenes probably evoked the older English tradition of the Irish stage accent to London audiences, and that, as such, its racializing effect was augmented. In addition to construing the character of the Afro-British maid Catelina as excessively physical and insufficiently intellectual, Brome's blackspeak re-directed the fantasies of conquest and racial degeneration proper to the denigrating Irish stage accent towards the black segment of the early modern British population. I end the chapter with a reflection on the complementarity of blackspeak and blackface: I show that blackspeak enabled theatre-makers to establish tactical distinctions between black characters that blackface could not, and, as such, helped stabilize systems of cross-racial representations that were becoming unstable under the pressure of social changes.

In the fourth chapter, "Black Moves: Race, Dance, and Power Play in Early Modern Europe," I bring to light the ambivalent power dynamics expressed by cross-racial black dances. While it is well known that, in the Atlantic world, starting with the first documented slave ship dance in 1664 (Fabre 34), black dances functioned simultaneously as a site for masters to

[30] "*Parler petit nègre, c'est exprimer cette idée: 'toi, reste où tu es*'" (Fanon, *Peau noire* 51). Robert Stam and Ella Shohat defines *petit nègre* as a legacy of WWI, "a simplified, deformed version of French that the military codified and deliberately taught to African soldier as a means both to infantilize them and to control their modes of interaction with their mainly white French commanding officers." (Stam and Shohat 58) In other words, *"petit nègre"* is a grammatical form of blackspeak.

exercise their power over black bodies, and for slaves to resist, build communities, retain African cultural practices, and mock their masters, I locate the origin of those power dynamics in late sixteenth century metropolitan European black dances that circulated between social dance sites, court spectacles, street processions, and commercial theaters. I argue that theatrical renderings of black dances helped crystallize in the public sphere emerging notions about blackness and helped conceptualize black dances as a practice steeped in interracial power play, a notion that would later inform colonial mindsets.

I first reconstruct, as much as possible, the black dances that circulated in Spain (*guineo*), England (anticks), and France (*mauresques*, *canaries*, and other ballet moves). Those dances heavily sexualized and animalized African bodies: in a culture where movement read as an expression of the soul, infusing black body language with animal forms downgraded Afro-diasporic people in the Great Chain of Being, giving them a liminal position in mankind that could only translate as a lowly position in the social order.

Yet black dances were also a tool for various groups that were or perceived themselves as oppressed to try and reclaim mobility and agency. Afro-Spaniards performed black dances to re-negotiate the terms of slavery, both symbolically and concretely, as a way of earning enough money to buy their own freedom, or of ingratiating the controversial black confraternities with the Spanish population. European aristocrats too capitalized upon the ambivalent power dynamics of black dances: they appropriated and integrated black dances into court spectacles such as *Le grand bal de la douairière de Billebahaut* (1626) and, perhaps, *The Masque of Blackness* (1605) in order to contest aspects of the royal authority that they experienced as tyrannical, and to renegotiate their condition in relation to the King, which they read as a form of bondage. In that sense, early modern black dances channeled various social energies into

choreographed performances of power relations.

Finally, I show that those dynamics were not lost on Philip Massinger, whose little known play *The Bondman* (1624) uses dance to express shifting power relations between black slaves and white masters on stage. Drawing simultaneously on the animalizing dimension of black dances that existed across the Channel and on the political dimension of black dances that originated in Spain, *The Bondman* created a prototype of black dances for the English commercial theatre. That prototype did not gain traction immediately, but its success was only postponed, for, as the English colonial drift deepened in the second half of the seventeenth century, black dances would become very popular on the Restoration stage. This last chapter brings together race studies and dance studies to show that, as early as the beginning of the seventeenth century, black bodies became a point of reference in European political imagination for marking oppression, privation of mobility, and resistance.

CHAPTER 1

THE DEVIL AND THE CITY: BLACKFACE ACROSS THE CHANNEL

"*Au Diable l'on peut faire tort.*"
['Tis fine to harm the Devil.]
Fifteenth Century Proverb

"The Devil is never nearer
Than when we are talking of him." (Ray 126)

1) Introduction: The Fabric of the Body Politick

In 1618, the influential Parisian anatomist Jean Riolan *fils* publicly dissected the body of a black *More* and separated the various layers of his skin in order to identify the provenance of blackness for the first time in Europe. He wrote: "This blackness does not go beyond the *cuticula* [skin outer layer], as we have seen recently during the public dissection of an Ethiop: below the black *cuticula*, his skin was whiter than snow."[31] This experiment presents a double interest. For science historians, it launched the trans-European tradition of what Andrew Curran has called "the anatomy of blackness": Riolan's dissection bears witness to a new scientific interest in black bodies in the context of France's colonial debuts in the Atlantic during the first decades of the seventeenth century. For theatre historians, especially those familiar with the analogy—popular in early modern studies—between the anatomy theatre and the commercial theatre, Jean Riolan's findings have a strong resonance with the early modern stage where all black *Mores* had white skin below a thin layer of black makeup. A premise of this chapter is that the scientific interest in black skin and the popular use of blackface on stage at the beginning of the seventeenth century

[31] "*At nigredo illa sola cuticulam inficit, ut nuper Aethiope ad anatomen dissecto vidimus: subjecta cutis nive candidior apparebat*" (Riolan 139).

came from the same place: both responded to the introduction of black Africans into European societies and discourses in the context of emergent colonialism. Anatomical and commercial theatres were venues of knowledge-production seeking to answer similar questions.

Specifically, the early modern stage was haunted by the question of the integration of black Afro-diasporic people into European societies: could they really be absorbed into societies that imagined themselves as body politics whose members were linked by such intimate and organic forms of collectivity? The stage answered imaginatively, with its own language: performance techniques, and, more specifically, with blackface, whose history, as this chapter will show in greater detail, gave it semiotic leverage.[32] Predictably, the stage answered inconclusively and inconsistently—yet a focused analysis reveals meaningful patterns. This chapter close reads the multimodal language used by the stage to address the major, if diffuse, social issue that was black integration at the beginning of the seventeenth century, in an effort to offer an anatomy of early modern blackface.

As late sixteenth century and early seventeenth century spectators flocked to watch Afro-diasporic characters performed in blackface on both sides of the Channel, the productions themselves often asked spectators to mobilize an older understanding of blackface derived from the religious plays that they knew and, often, could still attend—a diabolical understanding of blackface. Specific cues tricked the spectators' cognition into superimposing the image of the Devil onto the image of a black Afro-diasporic character, resorting to what I call the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface. Because, as we shall see, the character of the Devil in religious

[32] Kim F. Hall has shown how "preexisting tropes of blackness profoundly interacted with the fast changing economic relations of white Europeans and their darker 'others' during the Renaissance," how English "culture recognized the possibilities of this language for the representation and categorization of perceived physical difference" (K. Hall, *Darkness* 4). In this chapter, I extend Hall's argument to the complex language of theatrical performance, simultaneously textual, visual, and auditory.

theatre represented a menace for the French or the English body politic, always threatening to tear the social fabric of Christian societies, plays that resorted to the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface impelled spectators to consider whether black Afro-diasporic people constituted such threats. Because the Devil is not only the source of all evil but also, maybe more importantly, the creature that good Christians strive to expunge from their communities, their lives, their hearts, and their most secret thoughts, the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface was a powerful exclusionary mechanism. This performance trope expressed and crystallized anxieties surrounding the question of black integration into Western societies.

The diabolical hermeneutics of blackface articulated in religious terms a question that was not essentially religious but social, and this chapter traces the evolution of the relation between the semiotics of blackface and religion over thirty years' time. While English theatre never relinquished the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface in the early modern period—not even after the Restoration—some plays, starting with *Othello*, directed the spectators' attention to the devastating effects of the rhetoric of diabolization, and suggested that the religious semiotics that informed the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface obfuscated crucial non-religious aspects of the issue of black integration, such as color prejudice, class, and gender. Meanwhile, in France, the theatrical corpus evolved towards a secularization of blackface in the 1620s.

I claim that, in both countries, this evolution of the relation between the semiotics of blackface and religious epistemes coincided with a shift in concern from the possibility of black integration to its modalities. Indeed, by the 1610s in England and by the 1620s in France, the main question underlying semiotic reconfigurations of blackface was not "Can Africans become part of the body politic?" any longer but "What is the right position for Afro-diasporic people in our body politic?" This is a crucial hinge in the history of racial formation across the Channel:

the period is characterized by the gradual emergence of racialist thinking towards black Afro-diasporic people. That form of thinking, predicated on fantasies of domination, overlapped with xenophobic thinking, predicated on fantasies of expulsion. In the introduction, I defined racialization as a construction meant to define power relations within a heterogeneous society, since a human group is racialized when some of its features are essentialized and conceived of as negative and hereditary, which justifies the positioning of this group at the bottom of a social hierarchy. Race might mean something different in different times and places (depending on how the human group to be racialized is selected), but for all the instability of the word, racialization has a fairly stable and purpose across time and space: to justify existing or emerging social hierarchies. Black Africans and Afro-descendants were racialized in the first decades of the seventeenth century, and this acceleration of racial formation reoriented the semiotic configuration of blackface towards questions surrounding the modalities of black integration.

In this chapter, I first unfold the material practices of blackface proper to religious theatre and I use them to reconstruct—as much as possible—the impact of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface on early modern audiences. I then read the popularity of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface epitomized in *Titus Andronicus* (1594) in the light of the late Tudor and early Stuart social context recently uncovered by Imtiaz Habib. Moving on to later plays such as *Othello* (1604), and John Webster's *The White Devil* (1612), I show how some English plays pressured the religious framing of the black integration issue inherent in the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface to underline factors such as skin color, class, and gender. Crossing the Channel, I proceed to show how in Rouen—a point of Anglo-French contact—in the late 1600s, the same diabolical hermeneutics of blackface was integrated into ongoing local conversations about French expansion in the Atlantic, often with the effect of suggesting that such an expansion

would involve black Afro-diasporic subjects that could not be assimilated into any potential French colonial body politic. Some twenty years later, however, in the late 1620s, court ballets would secularize blackface altogether. They would ignore—not forget—the religious roots of the technique, and resort to an erotic hermeneutics of blackface that could code the subjugation and enslavement of black Africans in the French Atlantic in a celebratory mode. Ultimately, I hope to show that early modern blackface, far from being monolithic, was an extremely flexible theatrical device that enabled the stage to respond with vivacity and variety to the evolving racial climate of England and France at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

2) Defining the Diabolical Hermeneutics of Blackface

Since the fourteenth century, the moral blackness of the Devil had been conveyed through blackface in miracle and mystery play performances all across Europe. In English cycle plays, numerous episodes representing the Fall of Lucifer have him comment on his own transformation from white to black as divine punishment: he has become a "feende black" in the Chester cycle, "a Devil ful derke" in the Coventry creation, and he has "waxen blacke as any coyll" in the Wakefield creation (V. Vaughan 21). We know that those Devils were performed in blackface because the Coventry cycle plays were performed by professional guilds: referring to damned souls, the extant Drapers' Company records from 1561 to 1579 list extra costs for "the blacckyng of the sowles' facys" (V.Vaughan 22). Actors may have used "charred cork mixed with a little oil" (Callaghan 78), as minstrels would do in the future, some combination of soot and grease, or, more basically, charcoal. Indeed, the popularity of charcoal-based blackface in French religious theatre is palpable in a letter from Michel de L'Hospital to the Cardinal du Bellay (circa 1560), in which he recalls attending a perforrmance: "The most striking element

was the character of Lucifer, with horns on his forehead, his face all **smeared with charcoal**, and his coiled tail" (emphasis added).[33] The popularity of "*barbouillage"* can be explained in part by its cost-effectiveness.[34] Indeed, blackface required little money, which must have mattered in a theatrical culture that usually had performers pay for their own costumes.[35] However, blackface, taking time and effort to put on and off, required much patience, which suggests that its popularity in early modern commercial theaters, where performers did not pay for their own costumes, must have had motivations of a different order. A costlier option, probably used for court performances, was, rather than using charcoal, to burn almonds, or, even better—to burn ivory which was reputed to produce the most beautiful black (Karim-Cooper 14).

[33] "*Le plus étonnant, ce fut le personnage de Lucifer, avec ses cornes sur le front, son visage barbouillé de noir charbon, sa queue déroulant ses longs anneaux*" (qtd. in Lebègue 104).

[34] The alternative costumes of the Devil recorded in French Renaissance mystery plays are noticeably more expensive. For instance, Jacques Thiboust, royal notary and secretary, describes in detail the parade preceding the lavish performance of *Le Mystère des Saints actes des Apôtres* in Bourges in April 1536. Here is how he describes Satan's costume: "Satan sat between the flapping wings of the dragon, all clad in crimson damask velvet, strapped with a long snake who would not stop shaking its head and tail—he wore tiny snakes and dragons in other parts too. His wings, which he would often raise, were made of mirrors. He had half a helmet, which only covered his head; the helmet was golden and adorned with numerous raised little serpents and lizards that would spit fire. He held a scepter that emitted fire through four orifices … All those Devils had spurs on their hands and feet, so that, as they walked, they feet would open and close like the claws of peacocks" (Thiboust 21). Similarly, in Chapter 13 of *Le Quart livre des faicts et dicts héroïques du bon Pantagruel,* Rabelais describes a mystery play performed in St-Maixent en Poitou under the direction of the poet François Villon. This is how Rabelais describes *la diablerie*, the traditional street parade of Devils that preceded the play's performance: "He [Villon] paraded the pack of Devils through the town and to the market. Those Devils were all shelled in wolves', veals', and goats' skins, adorned with sheep heads, ox horns, cooking hooks, and strapped with big belts, with awfully loud cowbells and mule bells hanging. Some were holding black smoking sticks, some were holding long firebrands onto which they would throw some pitch powder at every crossroads, so as to produce terrible fire and smoke" (Rabelais 81). The diabolical costumes depicted by Rabelais and Thiboust both suggest animality and evoke the fire of hell. Blackface was most probably used in small productions that did not have the budget of the city of Bourges, or even the budget that François Villon had for the performance he directed. Blackface was the technique that could take an actor beyond the sphere of the human and into the sphere of hellishly burned bodies for the smallest amount of money.

[35] While cities and religious chapters were the most common patrons of mystery plays, with only a few exceptions, the actors had to provide and pay for their own costumes. Even in the most detailed extent record of expenses — the *mémoire* that exhaustively lists the daily expenses made by the organizing committee of *Le Mystère des Trois Doms*, played in the city of Romans in 1509 — no mention of costume-related expenses is to be found (Giraud 26).

While practitioners have left no traces regarding the materiality of medieval blackface, we have some images to turn to in order to visualize stage devils a little better. Indeed, the fourteenth century French manuscript of the *Miracles de Nostre Dame par personnages* comes with miniatures that have often been read as excerpts from performances of the plays.[36] In those miniatures, Devils are represented with hairy black skin, wild hair, pointed wings; they also have horns, and their goatish legs end with claws. The same description applies to the devils in the striking miniatures of the early fourteenth century manuscript of the *Mystère du jour du jugement* (Fig.2) with one important variation: in this mystery play, the Devils' skin tone could be black, greyish, or reddish brown. The miniatures suggest that the cosmetics used for blackface in France and in England could be more or less charged in pigments in order to create nuances. Other powdered substances (such as walnut wood, or the fruit stones mentioned by Nicholas Hilliard in *The Arte of Limning*) could also be mixed with grease in order to create different shades of *barbouillage*.

At their apex, shortly before the *Parlement de Paris* banned them, mystery plays started using blackface to represent dark-skinned Africans. For instance, in 1536, the procession of *Le Mystère des saints actes des Apôtres* in Bourges visually contrasted "six white *Mores*, their arms and legs exposed" [*six Maures blancs, bras et jambes nus*] with "a dozen more *Mores*, covered just as little" [*douze Maures, aussi nuds*] in emperor Nero's train (Thiboust 68). Similarly, in the 1547 *Comédie de l'adoration des trois rois à Jésus-Christ*, Marguerite de Navarre, channelling trans-European painterly trends, introduced a black Magus to the stage. Barbouillage was also

[36] In his still authoritative study of French medieval theatre performances, Gustave Cohen warns that hypotheses based on "the examination of miniatures are always suspect, because the artist could always follow his own fancy," but he also acknowledges, that, prior to the fifteenth century, those are the only documents we have to imagine the conditions of performance (Cohen 222).

used to represent dark-skinned Africans in secular theatre, starting with Morisque dances, which had been popular in courts since the fourteenth century.[37] Morisque dances accompanied aristocratic *entrées* into cities and were often embedded both in secular *jeux* and religious passions or mystères (Quéruel 502). Early seventeenth century commercial French theatre would draw on those traditions and appropriate barbouillage to perform black Afro-diasporic people.[38] Similarly, in the 1580s, English theatre practitioners started using blackface to represent darker Africans in plays such as Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* (1590), or maybe even earlier, in lost plays such as the anonymous *Theagenes and Chariclea* (1572) and *The Queen of Ethiopia* (1578).[39]

There were, of course, differences between diabolical blackface and Afro-diasporic blackface. The latter did away with all the animal components of the Devil's costume, added ethnically recognizable human garments, and resorted to wigs in an attempt to render the texture of natural African hair: in England, performers use wigs made of stiff lambskin fur (Callaghan 78). The add-ons changed, but the basic technique of painting an actor's face and either painting or covering their limbs with black cloth remained.[40] Thus, when blackface came to be mobilized in commercial theatre to represent Africans, productions could easily use strategic cues to reactivate the pre-existing associations of this technique with the Devil. Such reactivations constituted occurrences of what I call the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface.

---

[37] Here, I am contradicting Sylvie Chalaye's statement that Satan was the only character in blackface in medieval theatre. The Devil might have been the first character in blackface, but he soon got company.

[38] The earliest known occurrence is the performance of *Les Chastes Amours de Théagène et Cariclée*, by Alexandre Hardy, at l'Hôtel de Bourgogne in 1601, where the contrast between Heliodorus' white Ethiopian princess and the rest of her family (upon which the whole plot hinges) must have required the use of blackface.

[39]Information about those two lost plays are available at *Lost Plays Database*. www.lostplays.org/.

[40] Note that both religious and commercial early modern blackface techniques differ from the blackface of American minstrelsy in that they do not try to render the fullness of African lips through cosmetics, and seem generally less oriented towards caricature.

To understand how the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface affected the audience's perception of an Afro-diasporic character, we first need to know how spectators perceived stage devils. Whether vernacular religious plays represented the fall of Lucifer, the temptation of Adam and Eve, the tribulation of saints, or the dragging of lost souls down a hellmouth, the Devil and his demonic agents were by far and large its most popular characters. Tellingly, the number of diabolical parts kept growing steadily in French mystery plays until the middle of the sixteenth century (Lebègue 99). Their popularity was due to the comedic and profane nature of their actions and dictions. Bakhtin reads the medieval stage Devil as a carnivalesque "comic monster "the gay ambivalent figure expressing the unofficial point of view, the material bodily stratum. There is nothing terrifying or alien in him" (Bakhtin 41). E.K Chambers' has argued that the rise of comedic medieval stage Devils, understood as folk-play elements with a strong bend for social satire, manifested the gradual secularization of drama. Building upon this idea, Robert Weimann has shown that English Devils and their heirs, vices, circulating in the theatrically privileged area of the *platea*, enjoyed a relation of complicity with the audience, a greater proximity "encouraging subversive identification and sympathy with ostensibly anti-social behavior, blasphemy, and heterodoxy." For Weimann, "the social function of Devils is to provide a subversive expression for class frustration and protest" (qtd. in J. Cox 10).

Yet, theatre historians such as Lebègue remind us that "authors of mystery plays would never forget the original goal of stage devils: religious edification" (Lebègue 104). To understand how the medieval Devil functioned dramatically and epistemologically on stage, one must appreciate him as both a comedic folk figure and a theological figure that spectators truly believed in and feared most deeply—without pitting those two dimensions against each other. As

a result of this double epistemology of the Devil on stage, the audience's disposition towards the Devil probably fluctuated during performances, oscillating between sympathy and hostility.

The one thing that remained constant throughout those oscillations was the audience's perception of stage Devils as a disruptive force seeking to tear the fabric of a Christian society:

> Operating supportively within the bounds of traditional religion, stage Devils reveal communal values by default, illustrating (often satirically) what fifteenth century English society saw as most destructive of its sacral cohesion . . . The social role played by the Devil in Rogation, as in countless liturgical celebrations like it, was therefore to define what the community was not." (J. Cox 408-410)

Medieval stage devils threatened to tear the fabric of Christian societies, and this threatening dimension is key to the ideological work performed by the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface in early modern theaters. Indeed, it is my contention that the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface led spectators familiar with uses of blackface in religious theatre to wonder whether black Afro-diasporic people could possibly be incorporated into the social fabric of a Christian European society. In the following pages, I show how the old religious trope of blackface was mobilized by early modern stages across the Channel to articulate a question that was not fundamentally about religion, God, and the Devil any longer, but about race and the possibility of black integration into the community.

3) The Diabolical Hermeneutics of Blackface in London

The diabolical hermeneutics of blackface was a very popular dramaturgic device in London between 1590 and 1620. George Peele introduced this device onto the English stage in *The Battle of Alcazar* (1594), where he presents the villainous "Negro" Moorish king Muly

Mahamet in terms that activate the diabolical meaning of blackface from the get-go:

> Black in his look, and bloody in his deeds,
>
> And in his shirt stained with a cloud of gore,
>
> Presents himself with naked sword in hand,
>
> Accompanied as now you may behold,
>
> **With Devils coated in the shapes of men**. (1.1.16-20, emphasis added)

Peele launched a fashion that would last for thirty years.[41] In *Titus Andronicus* (1594), Aaron actively contributes to the deployment of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface:

> Lucius: Bring down the Devil for he must not die
>
> So sweet a death as hanging presently.
>
> Aaron: If there be Devils would I were a Devil,
>
> To live and burn in everlasting fire,
>
> So I might have your company in hell,
>
> But to torment you with my bitter tongue. (5.1.145-150)

In *Lust's Dominion* (1600), Eleazar the Moor, who, as Virginia Mason Vaughan notes, is directly connected to Aaron through biblical genealogy, earns insults such as Cardinal Mendoza's emblematic:

> Bell, book and candle, holy water, prayers,
>
> Shall all chime vengeance to the Court of Spain
>
> Till they have power to conjure down **that fiend,**

[41] Referring to Peele's mobilization of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface in *The Battle of Alcazar*, Anthony Gerard Barthelemy writes "Peele rejuvenated for the popular stage in England a metaphor that, without exaggeration, profoundly and adversely affected the way blacks were to be represented on the stage for years to come." (Barthelemy 78)

That damned Moor, that Devil, that Lucifer." (2.1.48-51, emphasis added)

Mendoza is taking risks, for "Who spurns the Moor / Were better set his foot upon the Devil" (2.1.6-7). In *Othello* (1604), Iago tries to make Brabantio fall for the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface that he deploys around Othello:

> Even now, now, very now, an old black ram
>
> Is topping your white ewe. Arise, arise;
>
> Awake the snorting citizens with the bell,
>
> Or else the **Devil will make a grandsire of you.**" (1.1.91-94, emphasis added).

Even in a light-hearted comedy such as George Chapman's *The Blind Begger of Alexandria* (1598), Porus, the king of Ethiopia, is called a devil when one of the wives that polygamous Cleanthes wishes to marry off chooses him to be her new husband:

> Elimine: In my eye now the blackest is the fairest,
>
> For every woman chooses white and red,
>
> Come martial Porus thou shalt have my love.
>
> Bebritius: Out on thee foolish woman **thou hast chose a Devil!**
>
> Porus: Not yet sir till he have horns. (10.161-165, emphasis added)

The gravity of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface is quickly deflated with a joke on cuckoldry; yet, Bebritius' comment shows that he reads harmless Porus in the tradition launched by Peele. Similarly, in Beaumont and Fletcher's comedy *Monsieur Thomas* (published in 1639 but written around 1616), when Thomas, in a bedtrick scene, realizes that he is in bed with a black woman, his reaction is quick: "Holy Saints defend me! / The Devil, Devil, Devil, O the Devil!" (5.1.30-31). Finally, in Rowley's *All is Lost by Lust* (published in 1633 but written circa 1619), when Jacinta refuses to marry the Moorish king despite her father Julianus' promise, she

uses familiar rhetoric:

> Moor: Look for a vengeance.
> Jacinta: Yes, some barbarous one,
> Tis natural to thee, base African,
> Thine inside's blacker then thy sooty skin;
> Oh Julianus, what hast thou done? Th'ast scap't
> The raging Lion, to **wrastle with a Dragon**,
> He would have slain with a majestic gripe,
> But this with venom; better had been thy fate
> By him to fall, then thus, by **such a hellhound**. (5.5.13-20, emphasis added)

The Moorish king with "sooty skin" is the Dragon and a hellhound: Jacinta's cue just activated the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface in the spectators' minds.

This brief catalogue is by no means exhaustive,[42] but it evidences a sustained craze across genres for the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface on the commercial English stage from 1590 to 1620. Before turning to a couple of English plays that do particularly interesting work pressuring the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface, we must place this popular technique in its historical context, for the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface was the response that the London stage offered to contemporary changes in the social, demographic, and discursive landscapes.

The black population amounted to 0.5% of London's population in the 1590's (Ungerer 20). Having surveyed a large amount of records (including royal and aristocratic household accounts, government proclamations and legal records, parish registers, medical notations, and personal accounts), Imtiaz Habib draws a clear line between the Afro-diasporic people who arrived in England during the first half of the sixteenth century, usually Afro-Iberians, who could occasionally exercise an "independent recognized public role" in England (Habib 117), and the

---

[42] Echoes of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface can be found in later plays, such as William Hemming's *The Fatal Contract* (written around 1638). "Eunuch: I'd search the Deserts, Mountains, Valleys, Plains, / Till I had met *Chrotilda,* whom by force / I'd make to mingle with these sooty limbs, / Till I had got on her one like to me, / Whom I would nourish for the Dumaine line; / That time to come might story to the world, / **They had the Devil to their Grand-father.**" (1.2.58-64 emphasis added)

Afro-diasporic people who arrived in the second half of the century. Those belonging to the latter category arrived in a time of economic crisis, "exclusively as a result of England's expeditionary forays to Africa and the Western Atlantic in search of new commodities and markets . . . its effect on the English was to transform the African into a menial subject suitable for commercial exploitation through enslavement" (Habib 63).[43] Amidst all the records he examined, Habib did not find a single one showing "an African in an independent professional capacity" (78). He concludes that "with a few exceptions, the living situations of black people revealed in the data span a range from menial work, albeit with skills, to chattel existence, including prostitution, with the last two categories constituting the clear majority" (116).[44]

In other words, the rare exceptions to the rule should not blind us to the fact that, if black Afro-diasporic people in Tudor England were not called slaves, they were usually unfree. The fetishism of keywords should not prevent us from examining actual power dynamics.[45] Habib's ability to perceive shades of grey between freedom and institutional slavery is most productive,

[43] For a detailed account of the role played in the introduction of black servants into the City by English merchants who were involved early in the slave trade, see Gustav Ungerer. "The Presence of Africans in Elizabethan England and the Performance of Titus Andronicus at Burley-on-the-Hill, 1595/96." *Medieval & Renaissance Drama in England*, vol. 21, 2008, pp. 19-55.

[44] Some scholars have made much of the exceptions to the rule. See for instance Miranda Kaufmann's "Slavery Shouldn't Distort the Story of Black People in Britain" ("In the same year as Hawkins' final voyage, an English court resolved that England had 'too pure an air for slaves to breathe in.' And it really was true that Africans in England were free"), and "Traces of Shame?" in which she criticizes Habib's take on the archives. While Kaufmann makes some valid methodological observations on the over-inclusiveness of Habib's hermeneutic tools, we should be wary of historical readings that try a little too hard to describe late Tudor and early Stuart England as living in a prelapsarian state vis-à-vis race. The political agenda that often drives them may be noble, but it still creates a strong bias. See the end of "Slavery shouldn't Distort": "The lives of the free black men and women living in this country 500 years ago tell a far more positive story than is usually told. Their contribution to British history was not merely as victims of white slave-traders. If we are to counter modern-day prejudice and inequality it's important that this contribution is understood and respected by all British people, both black and white."

[45] For an example of such fetishism, see Miranda Kaufmann, again: "The legacy of villeinage coupled with the strong rhetoric of freedom in legal and popular discourse ensured that Africans in Britain were not viewed as slaves in the eyes of the law. Neither were they treated as such. They were paid wages, married, and allowed to testify in court. Those scholars who have sought to place the origins of racial slavery in Elizabethan and early Stuart England must now look elsewhere." (Kaufmann, *Africans* abstract)

and the experience of "unspoken chattel bondage" that he describes is perhaps best understood from the early modern black Africans' viewpoint when read along the lines of twenty-first century human trafficking in the Western world.[46] Given the legal vacuum on the subject, it is likely that, on the spectrum of unfreedom, some late Tudor Afro-Britons fell close to slavery, while others fell closer to indentured servitude—like many other lower class Englishmen—, and others closer to servanthood. Habib's findings provide evidence that black Afro-Britons were subjected to various forms of economic exploitation within a highly profitable system—the only possible explanation for the intensification of smuggling over the period. This economic exploitation came together with a discourse of denigration that implicitly justified the positioning of Afro-Britons at the bottom of the social hierarchy. This discourse of denigration deployed itself in the discursive sphere, including, among others, the theatrical discourse that this dissertation examines, a religious discourse (Africans descend from Cham, so their servitude was sanctioned by scripture), and a medical discourse, exemplified by George Best's well-known *Discourse*, which defines blackness as a form of transmissible "Naturall infection" (Best 29).[47] This coalescent discourse of denigration received a boost in the early 1590s, when Habib notes a significant increase of Africans in England.[48] This increase worsened existent tensions about the

[46] To understand the specificity of late Tudor Africans' form of unfreedom and appreciate its seriousness, we need to stop comparing it systematically to plantation slavery for such a comparison almost necessarily trivializes the condition of Tudor and early Stuart Africans and obfuscates its exploitative dimension. For an example of such trivializing discourse, see for instance Liza Picard's *Elizabeth's London*: "It looks as if they were employees, not slaves, which they would have been in the West Indies" (Picard 110). Twenty-first century human trafficking is an interesting paradigm for understanding how people can *de facto* live in bondage in societies where slavery is illegal.

[47] For a recapitulation of early modern natural philosophical discourse in England, see Linda Boose. "The Getting of a Lawful Race." *Women, Race and Writing in the Early Modern Period*, edited by Hendricks, Margo and Patricia Parker, London: Routledge, 1994, pp. 42-45; and Kim F. Hall's *Things of Darkness*, pp. 11-13.

[48] This increase is due to the establishment of the Barbary Company in 1585, and to the Privy Council's letter patents of 1588 and 1592 authorizing commercial excursions to Guinea and Sierra Leone respectively.

distribution of material resources,[49] which, through the age-old mechanisms of scapegoating, translated into a spectacular rise of English xenophobia and anti-black sentiment in London.[50]

It is in this specific social context of growing resentment towards the black presence in England and gradual inuring to black unfreedom *de facto*, if not *de jure,* on the English soil—both of which occasioned and called for a denigration of Afro-Britons—that I read the vogue of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface on the English stage between 1590 and 1620. This performance technique responded to a new racial climate. With it, theatre explored, in its own language, the possibility for black Africans and Afro-descendants to fit into English society.

The connection between the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface and the racial climate in 1590s London is particularly palpable in *Titus Andronicus* (1594), the first English play to deploy the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface around a black African slave.[51] Although *Titus Andronicus* is by no means a religious play, with the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface, it repurposes a religious discourse for its own ends.

Why is Aaron the Moor part of the Gothic court? The Goths are evocative of Germanic

---

[49] "Increasingly intransigent and expansive political (religious) and economic problems with the Low-Countries and Spain, including tense military standoffs in the 1580's, coupled with a fourfold increase in the national population between 1500 and 1600, resulted in rising prices of essentials, food scarcities, popular dissension and riots, and increase in the proportion of the London poor greater than that of the city's population, collective xenophobia about aliens, and the 'obsessional' surveillance that was the response of the government to perceived challenges to its authorities, and to fears about alien infiltration and corruption of its national life." (Habib 118) Tudor Africans, despite their position at the bottom of the social hierarchy, started being perceived as competitors for resources as immigrants are nowadays in times of economic duress.

[50] Emily Bartels has argued that, in the last of the three decrees promulgated by Elizabeth to expel "Negroes and Blackamoors" from the kingdom—written in 1601, almost ten years after *Titus Andronicus* and ten years before *The White Devil*—"the Queen's explicitly 'racist' language suggests that England's subjects had grown more inclined ideologically towards discrimination against 'blacks' as a subject group" (Bartels 319). Habib understands those decrees as the logical outcome of the hostility towards Tudor Africans.

[51] Several plays of the period portray Afro-diasporic people in blackface in positions of servitude, such as Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* (1590), George Peele's *King Edward I* (1593), and *Love's Labour's Lost* (1598). However, those plays do not deploy the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface around those characters. To my knowledge, the only other play to use this hermeneutics on an African slave is John Marston's *The Wonder of Women* (1606).

regions to us, and the "hyperwhiteness" of the Gothic queen Tamora, to quote Francesca T. Royster, certainly reinforces such impressions. However, if we keep in mind that early modern Spaniards thought of themselves, very strongly so, as descending from the Goths (and a play like *All is Lost by Lust* shows that the English were aware of this lineage), we get to read Gothic identity in *Titus Andronicus* through a double ethnic lens: Goths are both Barbarians and Spaniards. In the light of the popularity of the Black Legend in 1590s England, they might even be Barbarians *because* they are Spaniards. The presence of Aaron the Moor within the Gothic body politic before the play even starts, and his affair with Tamora (whose own name overbrims with Moorishness: "*esta mora*"), could have a simple explanation: Shakespeare might very well be playing up the association between black slaves and Iberians in English common perceptions, as well as the racial component of the Black Legend, that is, the association that Barbara Fuchs brought to light between Spaniards and their black slaves in English popular culture.[52]

Consequently, the Roman practice of slavery and the early modern Iberian practice of color-based slavery overlap in Shakespeare's play. The audience is led to identify Aaron unambiguously as a slave, based on his initial costume:

> Away with **slavish** weeds and **servile** thoughts,
>
> I will be bright and shine in pearl and gold,
>
> To wait upon this new made Empress.
>
> To wait said I? To wanton with this Queen." (2.1.18-21, emphasis added)

[52] For Fuchs, the Black Legend conflates what Europeans perceived as the immorality of the Spaniards' relation to Others in the New World with what they perceived as the physiological blackness of Spaniards. "Particularly in anti-Spanish propaganda—the *Leyenda negra* . . . —Spain is consistently associated with Islam, with Africa, with dark peoples. It is important to recover the essentializing "blackness" of this cultural mythology: critics typically read it metaphorically, as a figure for Spain's cruelty and greed in the New World, yet it often refers in unambiguous terms to Spain's racial difference, its essential Moorishness. While this usage in no way counters the frequent association of blackness with evil in the early modern period, it pointedly conflates the metaphorical with a literal sense, in an attempt to render Spain visibly, biologically black." (Fuchs, "Spanish Race" 94-95)

Not only does he want to improve his social status, Aaron cannot even stand the idea of "waiting upon" someone in any sense of the word: the slave rejects his own servitude. Bassanius is touching a sensitive nerve when he calls Aaron a "swart Cymerion" (2.3.73), a term which reinforces the identification between Goths and Spaniards, since a *cimarrón* was a runaway African slave in the Spanish Americas throughout the sixteenth century.[53]

Meanwhile, another strong association plays out: if early modern Spaniards thought of themselves as descending from the Goths, early modern Englishmen thought of themselves as heirs to the Romans.[54] Starting with Tamora's statement "I am incorporate in Rome, / A Roman now adopted happily" (1.1.459-60), the play's political investment does not lie in examining what happens when the Roman body politic tries to "incorporate" a group of Goths that includes a Moor, but what happens when the English body politic tries to "incorporate" Iberians and their black slaves, either symbolically or literally. For, as Gustav Ungerer points out,

---

[53] I develop this argument at length in "Aaron's Roots: Spaniards, Englishmen, and Blackamoors in *Titus Andronicus*." *Early Theatre*, vol. 1, no. 2, 2016, pp. 59-80. Modern editors usually spell this word "Cimmerian," and editorial notes will explain that Cimmerians were a "legendary people upon whom the sun never shone" (Norton Shakespeare 425), from the confines of Europe (around the Black Sea). Many editors' rationale is that the land of Cimmerians was very dark, which makes it a fitting setting for the Moor. Surprisingly, modern editors have kept following Samuel Johnson's judgment on this matter: "The Moor is called 'Cimmerian' from the affinity of blackness to darkness." (*Johnson on Shakespeare* 304). However, this explanation blatantly contradicts climate theory, which was still the dominant mode of accounting for black skin in the 1590s. "Cymerion" is the spelling used both in the quartos and in the first folio: I argue that it is a phonetic distortion of the Spanish word "*cimarrón*," also distorted into "Cimaroons" in *Sir Francis Drake Revived* (1626)— which Sir Francis Drake himself is supposed to have corrected before his death in 1596—where "Cimaroons" are defined as "a black people which about eighty years past fled from the Spaniards their masters, by reason of their cruelty, and are since grown to a nation, under two kings of their own. The one inhabiteth to the west, the other to the east of the way from Nombre de Dios" (Nicholas 5). The word was later spelled "Symerons" by William Davenant in *The History of Sir Francis Drake* (1659), which bears witness to the crucial role played by Drake (who first encountered *cimarrones* in Panama in the 1570s) in disseminating the term across English culture (Davenant 11).

[54] On the English identification with ancient Rome, especially once James assumed power, see Thomas James Dandelet. *The Renaissance of Empire in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp. 248-281; Anthony Miller. *Roman Triumphs and Early Modern English Culture*. New York: Palgrave, 2001; Jonathan Goldberg. *James I and the Politics of Literature: Jonson, Shakespeare, Donne, and their Contemporaries*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989; as well as Freyja Cox Jensen. *Reading the Roman Republic in Early Modern England*. Boston: Brill, 2012.

> The most experienced slaveholders in early modern England were the Portuguese New Christians or *conversos* who sought refuge in English ports when in 1536 Portugal, under Spanish pressure, established an Inquisition of its own and instituted the purity of blood statutes. The community of the Portuguese conversos reached its peak in the last decades of queen Elizabeth's reign when it numbered between eighty and ninety members." (Ungerer 32)

This black African slave, Aaron the Moor, becomes the catalyst for the larger contemporary English anxieties about immigration and its fear of turning into a nation foreign to itself that Daniel Vitkus has studied thoroughly.[55] Those anxieties crystallize on stage into the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface.

The diabolical hermeneutics of blackface are deployed quite transparently around Aaron, while he declares, with the most serpentine sibilant alliterations one can think of:

> Aaron: Some Devil whispers curses in my ear
>
> And prompts me, that my tongue may utter forth
>
> The venomous malice of my swelling heart.
>
> Lucius: Away, inhuman dog, unhallowed slave!
>
> Sirs, help our uncle to convey him in. (5.3.11-15)

Lucius Andronicus, modeling audience reactions, responds to the diabolical hermeneutics of

[55] "As English identity mutated, acquiring, for example, a self-image that increasingly took on a mercantile form, English subjects learned to change by incorporating what were initially foreign behaviors and practices . . . As contact with radically different cultures increased during the course of the seventeenth century, notions of racial identity rigidified, but, as Loomba points out, this wasn't because of a heightened sense of difference experienced by English subjects who encountered Amerindians, Asians, Moors, and other alien peoples. It was the fear of becoming like the 'Other'—of 'turning Turk,' or being Judaized, or taking on an Italianate identity, and the like — that generated the need for a rigidly defined discourse of racial alterity . . . In their relations with cultural contestants like France, Spain, Portugal, Venice, and Turkey, the English were, in many ways, a society of mimic-men who were learning (or hoping) to imitate alien models of power, wealth, and luxury." (Vitkus 9)

blackface that Aaron activates by reading the Moor as excluded from mankind ("inhuman dog"), from the Roman religious community ("unhallowed"), and from citizenship ("slave").

The exclusionary mechanisms inherent in the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface are extended to Aaron's "Blackamoor child," who is introduced by his own nurse as "a Devil" (4.2.64): "a joyless, dismal, black, and sorrowful issue . . . loathsome as a toad" (4.2.66-67) later called a "black slave" (4.2.119) and a "tawny slave" (5.1.27) by his father. The child's (unstable) dark complexion makes him diabolical in Lucius' eyes:

> Lucius: Oh worthy Goth this is the incarnate Devil,
> That robbed Andronicus of his good hand,
> This is the pearl that pleased your Empress eye,
> And here's the base fruit of her burning lust,
> Say wall-eyed slave whither wouldst thou convey,
> This growing image of thy fiendlike face,
> Why dost not speak? What deaf, not a word?
> A halter, soldiers! Hang him on this tree,
> And by his side his fruit of bastardy.
> Aaron: Touch not the boy, he is of royal blood.
> Lucius:Too like the sire for ever being good,
> First hang the child that he may see it sprawl,
> A sight to vex the father's soul withal.
> Get me a ladder. (5.1.40-52)

Reading the baby's color as a promise of diabolism ("this growing image of thy fiendlike face"), Lucius subjects the baby to the same forms of social exclusion as his father: he excludes from citizenship and thus treats like a slave a baby who was born free according to Roman law. Indeed, according to the Roman law famously captured in the maxim "*partus sequitur ventrem,"* children were to inherit their mother's status, regardless of their father's condition—and the play seems to reference this law at times.[56] Interestingly, this disposition of Roman law ran contrary to

[56] Aaron shows that he is aware of this law when he defends his son against the attacks of Chiron and Demetrius: "Look how the black slave smiles upon the father, / As who should say, old Lad I am thine own./ Nay he is your brother by the surer side,/ Of that self blood that first gave life to you,/ And from your womb where you imprisoned were,/ He is enfranchised, and come to light:/ Although my seal be stamped in his face." (4.2.115-126) In this

English law (until English law changed and aligned itself on the Roman model in the British colonies, starting with Virginia in 1662). Thus, by determining the baby's social status based on his father's social status and black complexion, Lucius is not thinking like a Roman, but like a late sixteenth century Englishman—like Shakespeare's spectators.

What this late sixteenth century Englishman sees in the mixed race baby is a menace to the established order of his society, threatening, most exemplarily, to interrupt the rightful royal lineage. Indeed, Aaron's baby is a double threat to the Roman monarchy, first because he is the fruit of adultery on the empress' part, second, because Aaron's plan to save his son's life consists in hiding the empress's adultery and putting a Moorish impostor on the throne:

> Not far, one Muliteus, my countryman
> His wife but yesternight was brought to bed.
> His child is like to her, fair as you are.
> Go pack with him, and give the mother gold,
> And tell them both the circumstance of all,
> And by this their child shall be advanced
> And be received for the emperor's heir,
> And be substituted in the place of mine,
> To calm this tempest whirling in the court;
> And let the emperor dandle him for his own. (4.2.151-160)

Aaron could have bought the child of any lower class Roman for that matter. Instead, his plan to use a white Moorish Roman child is designed in ways that point first to an imagined solidarity among Moorish Romans that would trump their political allegiance to Rome, and second, to a Moorish desire to take over Rome, to take over the country. Those fantasies are characteristic of xenophobic imagination across the ages, and the early modern London reflected in this play was not exempt from them.

---

passage, when the baby looks at his black African father ("smiles upon his father"), he is referred to as a "black slave," but when the baby is described as coming out of his ultra-white mother's womb ("that self blood that first gave light to you,/ From your womb where you imprisoned were"), Aaron puns in order to refer to the baby as "enfranchised," using legal vocabulary. Aaron implies that Tamora's womb has the power to free her son twice.

The threatening posture of Aaron the Moor in the ink and pen drawing signed by Henry Peacham in 1595 (Fig. 3) has confused generations of Shakespearean scholars, who have struggled to reconcile Aaron's menacing posture—he looks like he is about to cut the throat of white men on their knees—with the lines from the play quoted below the image, for those lines reference the initial scene of Roman triumph when the Goths are paraded as prisoners and Tamora begs for her sons' life. On stage, Aaron is unlikely to have behaved so mightily at that moment, since he is among the Gothic prisoners. Several hypotheses have been formulated to account for this discrepancy, but in light of the latest close reading, we should add one to the list.[57] Aaron's menacing posture might reflect the early modern English perception of the presence of black Afro-diasporic people in 1590s London-Rome as fundamentally threatening, even—or perhaps especially—in their subordinate capacity as enslaved prisoners.

However, a couple of elements suggest some degree of resistance in the play to the idea of ridding Rome of its Moors. First, Aaron's mixed race baby is not hanged: Aaron negotiates to save his life, and, after Lucius has promised that "Thy child shall live, and I will see it nourished" (5.1.60), spectators lose trace of the baby. We can only imagine that he gets to grow up in Rome in some servile employment—he grows in the shadows, but he does not disappear from the city. Second, the very punishment designed by Lucius for Aaron symbolically reveals the impossibility of uprooting Afro-diasporic people:

Set him breast-deep in earth and famish him,

[57] For a recapitulation of those hypotheses, see June Schlueter. "Rereading the Peacham Drawing," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, vol. 50, no. 2, 1999, pp.171-184. June Schlueter herself argues that "the Peacham drawing depicts a sequence from *Eine sehr klägliche Tragaedia von Tito Andronico* und der Hoffertigen Kaeserin (*A Very Lamentable Tragedy of Vitus Andronicus and the Haughty Empress*), a play performed in Germany by English actors which survives, in German, in a volume published in Leipzig in 1620" (Schlueter 171) while the lines from *Titus Andronicus* were added by a confused reader later on.

There, let him stand, and rave, and cry for food.

If anyone relieves or pities him,

For the offence, he dies. This is our doom. (5.3.178-181)

In Lucius' imaginative mind, it is the Roman soil itself that will kill Aaron: Lucius goes for strong symbols, and yet, the ambivalent image can also read in the opposite way, as Aaron taking root into the Roman soil. Third, the dynamics of compassion in the playhouse during that scene function as a moment of collective disavowal for Lucius' racist agenda. The very fact that Lucius should need to forbid Roman and English spectators alike from taking pity on Aaron is an indicator that the risk was real: some of the spectators (those who were sympathetic to Aaron as a father) could take pity on him, and could reject Lucius' resolution of the play. At this moment, a significant part of the audience must have dissociated themselves from the problematically authoritative voice of Lucius.[58] This final scene scripts a potential disavowal of Lucius' attempt at ridding Rome of the synecdochic Moor on the audience's part.

If the three edicts that Elizabeth promulgated between 1596 and 1601 to deport "Negars and Blackamoors" from England were, as Emily Bartels shows, met with resistance by English

[58] Lucius is a problematic character throughout the play. He clearly is a figure of authority: freeing Romans from an emperor that they hate, he is eventually hailed as "Rome's royal emperor." He appears, throughout the play, as Titus' good son, the embodiment of old Roman virtue, who "loves his pledges dearer than his life" (3.1.290). However, this figure of authority systematically commits deeds that make the audience withdraw their sympathy from him. Indeed, his first appearance on stage portrays him as an executioner, and, worst, a performer of human sacrifices, as he is the main supporter of his father's decision to sacrifice Tamora's son and to ignore her prayers: "Away with him, and make a fire straight,/ And with our swords upon a pile of wood / let's hew his limbs till they be clean consumed" (1.1.126-129). The paradoxical barbarity of the human sacrifice that he performs stains Lucius from the opening of the play. Moreover, he seems to enjoy the taste of blood—or at least, its smell: "Alarbus' limbs are lopped/ And entrails feed the sacrificing fire,/ Whose smoke like incense does perfume the sky" (1.1.142-145). There is little doubt that the scene when Lucius sets up to lynch a defenseless baby constituted a moment of intense pathos in the theatre. Few things on stage seem to have moved and shocked European early modern audiences more than the murder of children. In addition to being ready to kill a baby, Lucius also orders for Tamora's body to be thrown outside of the city and left without sepulture (an act of impiety, as we know from his earlier reaction to Titus' refusal to let Mutius be buried properly). Finally, the torture to which he condemns Aaron betrays a rich sadistic imagination. His authority stands on shaky moral ground.

subjects, the fates of Aaron and his son in *Titus Andronicus* already suggested, in 1594, that, for all the xenophobia and anti-black sentiment in early modern London, black Afro-diasporic people could not be excised from the social fabric of English society so easily. *Titus Andronicus* is a highly ambivalent play whose use of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface conveyed to spectators the idea that black Afro-diasporic people could hardly fit into English society, while simultaneously intimating, through various dramaturgic moves, that Africans probably could not be excised from that society any longer either.

It must be said: some Englishmen were more optimistic than Shakespeare—some believed that black Africans could be incorporated into Christian communities. They were supporters of the evangelical movement advocating for the baptism and conversion of black Africans in late sixteenth century England. Protestants and Catholics agreed that the covenant of baptism, this means of salvation, had the power to cleanse the black souls of Africans: Rebecca Anne Goetz shows how the evangelical desire to convert heathens to the only true version of Christianity and to stem the advance of Catholicism in the Americas informed the rhetoric used by the English to defend their actions in Ireland in the 1580s, and then in early Virginia (Goetz 13-22). In the *Discourse on Western Planting* (1584), for instance, Richard Hakluyt—the geographer whose work became "a potent catalyst for the exploration movement" (Helfers 163) and functioned as "a geographical reference, a source of information for new exploration, and even a kind of propaganda, in the sense that the information given in the book is designed to feed the impulse to explore among its readers" (Helfers 167)—outlines his approach to colonial expansion in the Atlantic. His first chapter justifies the colonial project with evangelical considerations informed by the dynamics of Anglo-Spanish rivalry:

It is necessary for the salvation of those poor people who have sat so long in darkness and

> in the shadow of death that preachers should be sent unto them: But by whom should these preachers be sent? By them no doubt who have taken upon them the protection and defense of the Christian faith: now the Kings and Queens of England have the name of defenders of the faith: By which title I think they are not only charged to maintain and patronize the faith of Christ, but also to enlarge and advance the same. (Hakluyt 8)

As James Helfers puts it, "for Hakluyt evangelism becomes a convenient and conventionally admired motive for exploration, though the reader senses that the editor's actual motives lie elsewhere" (Helfers 173). Hakluyt's actual motives (colonial greed) explain why "the primary emphasis upon conversion and possession falls squarely on pagan idolatry in the New World" (Borge 226), but the evangelical discourse that he mobilizes extended to all forms of idolatry.

The London stage registered this expansive evangelical desire to convert heathens abroad. Most exemplarily, in Middleton's 1613 Lord Mayor pageant *The Triumphs of Truth*, the "King of the Moors," "his Queen and two attendants of their own colour" performed in blackface are products of this evangelical discourse. The Moorish King declares:

> I forgive the judgings of th' unwise,
> Whose Censures ever quicken in their Eyes,
> Only begot of outward form and show,
> And I think meet to let such Censurers Know,
> How ever Darkness dwells upon my Face,
> Truth in my soul sets up the Light of Grace;
> And though in days of Error I did run
> To give all Adoration to the Sun,
> The Moon and Stars; nay Creatures base and poor,
> Now only their Creator I adore:
> My Queen and People all, at one time won,
> By the Religious Conversation
> Of English Merchants, Factors, Travellers,
> Whose Truth did with our Spirits hold commerce
> As their affairs with us, following their path
> We all were brought to the true Christian Faith. (Middleton B4v-C)

The Moorish king's form of idolatry (giving "all Adoration to the Sun, The Moon and Stars") strongly echoes the opening lines of Hakluyt's *Discourse on Western Plantation*, which mention that the Indians "which Stephen Gomes brought from the coast of Norumbega [a legendary North-Eastern settlement] in 1524 worshipped the sonne, the moone, and the starres" (Hakluyt 7). Hakluyt's *Discourse on Western Plantation,* written for the Queen, was not published before 1877, so Middleton probably did not have access to this text specifically, but, in *The Triumphs of Truth,* he seems to channel a standard imagery that circulated in travel writings to describe idolatry around the world. Doing so, Middleton creates, with this Moorish king, a synchretic figure for idolatry that merges Indianness and Moorishness into one image of exotic darkness. This 1613 scene exemplifies the contemporary beliefs that Africans who were not Muslims could be converted to Christianity, that English expansion overseas was bringing the only "true Christian faith" (Protestantism) to the New World, and that, after conversion, an Afro-diasporic person could have a white soul ("truth in my soul sets up the light of grace").

The construction of Middleton's Moorish king stands in stark contrast to the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface, and certainly suggests that contradictions existed within the English theatrical discourse on blackness at the turn of the century.[59] Yet the evangelical movement seems, overall to have done relatively little to effect the social integration of black Afro-

[59] English evangelism overseas was to be short-lived. Focusing on Virginia, Goetz shows that English evangelism started slacking in the 1620s for several reasons. Indeed, while the English initially thought of Virginia as an ideal "anti-Catholic Anglo-Indian commonwealth" (Goetz 22), the Indian massacre of 1622 along the James river put an end to English interest in including Indians into the body politic that Anglicanism held together, and they started doubting Indians' ability to truly convert to Christianity. Following a similar dynamic, while there are records of black slave baptisms to be found in the 1620s, Anglo-Virginian slave owners became increasingly reluctant to baptize or catechize their black slaves over the next fifty years, because many slaves had understood the complex implicit value of baptism in English culture, and successfully claimed their freedom on the basis of their Protestant baptism until a law in 1667 closed this loophole. To defend their interests, Anglo-Virginians developed a discourse of "hereditary heathenism" emphasizing the inherent inability of Indians and Africans to truly convert to Christianity (Goetz 86-111).

diasporic people in England. Contradicting Imtiaz Habib's reading of Anglican baptisms of Africans in late Tudor and Stuart London as a "proto-colonial process," Matthew Dimmock has recently argued that the baptism of "strangers" was by no means systematic in early modern London, all the more since there was no established ritual for baptizing adults in England until 1662 (Dimmock 458). Dimmock insists on the "improvisatory and haphazard" nature of the "turning of strangers" to "the faythe of chryst" in early seventeenth century London, "which reveals fault lines in early modern English thinking about conversion and difference" (Dimmock 458). As we shall see in Chapter 2, this was a major difference between England and Spain, where the baptism of Afro-Spaniards was deemed crucial and systematically implemented.

The failure of evangelical thinking to effect the social integration to black Africans in early modern London might have informed a play like *Othello* (1604) that revolves entirely around the possibility for a Christian black man to become "incorporate" into Venice. In *Othello*, Shakespeare presents his audience with a black Moor whose struggle to join in the Venetian body politic cannot be blamed on religion: he is a Christian defending Venice and Cyprus against the Turks, even in death.[60] He qualifies even better than Middleton's Moorish king to be accepted within the fold of Venetian society. The rejection that Othello faces from characters such as Iago within Venetian society is not about religion, but about the color of his skin. Propping skin color as a new factor to reckon with when it comes to integration in the modern world, the play pressures the assumption that conversion to Christianity guarantees the integration of black Afro-diasporic people into a European body politic. In other words, the play

[60] The following lines are usually accepted as evidence of Othello's Christianity: "Othello: Why, how now, ho! From whence ariseth this?/ Are we turn'd Turks, and to ourselves do that/ Which heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?/ For Christian shame, put by this barbarous brawl:/ He that stirs next to carve for his own rage/ Holds his soul light; he dies upon his motion." (2.3.152-157) Here are the lines delivered by Othello in his death scene: "Set you down this,/ And say besides that in Aleppo once,/ Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk/ Beat a Venetian and traduced the state,/ I took by the throat the circumcised dog,/ And smote him, thus./ *Stabs himself*." (5.1.360-365)

indirectly highlights the limits of Protestant evangelical thinking about Africans.

In a play asserting that the issue of black integration in Venetian—understand English—society is *not* an issue of religion, the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface was bound to come under close scrutiny. The play shows spectators a situation in which the Devil incarnate, Iago, uses the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface as part of his openly declared strategy to have Venice close its doors to the Christian Moor. Iago's cues never miss their aim when it comes to demonizing the blackfaced Othello. He first poisons Brabantio:

> Even now, now, very now, an old black ram
>
> Is topping your white ewe. Arise, arise;
>
> Awake the snorting citizens with the bell,
>
> Or else **the Devil will make a grandsire of you.**" (1.1.91-94 emphasis added)

He then poisons Roderigo, by suggesting to him, about Desdemona: "Her eye must be fed; and what delight shall she have to **look on the Devil**" (2.1.220-221 emphasis added). By placing this demonizing discourse in the mouth of a machiavellian character whose vengeful intentions are transparent to the audience, Shakespeare underlines the highly effective exclusionary effects of the religious discourse in which the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface participates.

The diabolical hermeneutics of blackface is effective, even when it is a lie. Indeed, at the end of the play, Iago's own diabolical nature—which spectators familiar with Vice characters in morality plays had come to suspect earlier—is revealed, as Othello declares:

> I look down towards his feet; but that's a fable
>
> If that thou be'st a Devil, I cannot kill thee
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Will you, I pray, demand that demi-Devil

Why he hath such ensnared my soul and body?" (5.2.292-308)

By placing the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface in the mouth of the Devil himself (here we have to remember that, etymologically, the Devil is the great slanderer), the play suggests that the religious discourse in which the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface participates can be used as a form of slander directed at Afro-Britons.

In the final moments of the play, once Othello has killed Desdemona, her servant Emilia reactivates the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface:

Othello: She's, like a liar, gone to burning hell: 'Twas I that kill'd her.

Emilia: O, the more angel she, and you the blacker devil!

Othello: She turn'd to folly, and she was a whore.

Emilia: Thou dost belie her, and thou art a devil. (5.2.129-132)

The context in which those lines are delivered is crucial: angry, Emilia parallels Othello's syntactic constructions in an intense stichomythic exchange ("She did X, and she was Z" – "YOU do X, and YOU are Z!"). In that context, calling the Moor a devil is the strongest slur that Emilia can think of. But this rhetorical choice ironically backfires: spectators know that Desdemona is not a whore, and the parallel construction suggests that Othello is no more of a devil than Desdemona was of a whore. In other words, this final occurrence of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface in *Othello* brings attention to the emotional contexts in which the religious discourse of diabolization is utilized—to the affects driving those who mobilize it.

The trajectory between *Titus Andronicus* and *Othello* is the trajectory from a play in which Shakespeare utilizes the novelty technique of the diabolical hermeneutic of blackface for his own purposes to a play in which, ten years later, he draws attention to the various motivations behind the use of the larger religious discourse of demonization in which the diabolical

hermeneutics of blackface participates. In *Othello*, we find a reflection on the embeddedness of a popular performance technique, blackface, in a religious discourse that can too easily be mobilized and repurposed for all the wrong reasons (such as envy, greed, hate, and anger, to name but those that animate Iago and Emilia). Eight years later, John Webster was to respond to *Othello* and to take up the critique of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface where Shakespeare had left off, in *The White Devil* (1612). While Shakespeare's play underlined the distressing ease with which the discourse of black diabolism could be manipulated on stage and off stage, Webster's play underlined the inability of that same discourse to reckon with the real challenges hindering the integration of black Afro-diasporic people into European societies.

Webster's play completely shatters the logic that underlies the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface.[61] As the title of the play suggests, nearly every single character is a bit of a Devil. "O me! This place is hell," Vittoria ultimately realizes (5.3.187). When an offended Brachiano asks "Do you know me?" Flamineo puns in a flash of clear-sightedness:

> Oh my Lord! Methodically.
>
> As in this world there are degrees of evils:
>
> So in this world there are degrees of Devils.
>
> You're a great duke; I, your poor secretary." (5.2.57-60)

[61] Basing his plot loosely on a thirty-year-old historical anecdote, John Webster retraces in *The White Devil* the story of Paulo Giordano d'Ursini, duke of Brachiano, and his beloved Vittoria Corombana, the "famous Venetian Courtizan" of the play's frontispiece. Brachiano, who has been married for a long time to Isabel, the sister of Francisco de Medici, Duke of Florence, falls in love with Vittoria Corombana, a Venetian lady now residing in Rome, and married to the less-than-affluent Camillo, nephew of the Cardinal Monticelso. After having Isabel and Camillo executed with the help of his Machiavellian servant Flamineo (Vittoria's brother and personal "pandar"), Brachiano finds his way into the house of convertites where Vittoria has been sentenced by Monticelso after he found her guilty of her husband's death, and he elopes with her to Padua, where he marries her. Francisco de Medici and Monticelso, who is now Pope, decide to avenge the dead: Francisco disguises himself as Mulinassar, a Moorish general, and offers his services to Brachiano in the imminent war against the duke of Florence. Having found their way into Brachiano's court, Francisco and his cohort of avengers can execute their mission. They poison Brachiano and execute Flamineo, together with Zanche and with Vittoria, the eponymous "white Devil" of the play.

Each protagonist is some "degree of Devil": the revengers' and the spectators' task is to assess exactly how evil they are. The play itself points the difficulty of this task by presenting the spectator with a series of failed assessments.[62] In this play, the proliferation of unknowable white Devils who use the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface against the Moorish character of Zanche undermines the dichotomy between good and evil that informs the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface. This move strongly echoes Shakespeare's decision to place the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface in the mouth of the Devil himself, and points towards intertextuality.

The intertextuality is patent to the extent that Webster borrows the character of Othello and includes him, thinly veiled, in his own play. When Mulinassar, the Moorish general, arrives at Brachiano's court in Padua, Flamineo and Horatio function as embedded spectators and declare:

> Horatio: Saw you not yet the Moore that's come to Court?
> Flamineo: Yes, and confer'd with him i'th Dukes closet,
> I have not seen a goodlier personage,
> Nor ever talked with man better experienced
> In State affairs or rudiments of war.
> He hath by report, served the Venetian
> In Candy these twice seven years, and been chief
> In many a bold design
> . . . . . .
> Horatio: Is the Moor a Christian?
> Flamineo: He is.
> . . . . . .
> I never saw one in a stern bold look

[62] Vittoria is found guilty of a crime she did desire and suggest, but the mistrial that leads to her condemnation invalidates the justice of the decision. The revengers have good cause to execute the uxoricide Brachiano, but, as is the case in any true revenge tragedy, in doing so, they "turn'd murderers" themselves (5.4.291). Consequently, Brachiano's son, young Giovanni, who rules the state at the end of the play, condemns the avengers: even a child can tell that the avengers are some degree of Devils. The same vision of universal damnation permeates the scene when Monticelso shows Francisco de Medici his fascinating "general catalogues of knaves" in Rome which has "quoted, by intelligence,/ The names of all notorious offenders / Lurking about the city" (4.1.30-32)—the closest thing to a divine Book of Life and Death in human hands. "Some there are which call it my black book: / Well may the title hold, for though it teach not / The art of conjuring, yet in it lurk / The name of many Devils" (4.2. 33-36). However, Francisco de Medici ultimately declares this record to be highly unreliable, due to administrative corruption. The book of intelligence, the trial, the final execution, all the instruments of justice that the play wields prove inconclusive: they generate as much injustice as justice, blurring the line between good and evil.

Wear more command, nor in a lofty phrase
Express more knowing, or more deep contempt
Of our slight airy Courtiers. He talks
As if he had trauail'd all the Princes Courts
Of Christendom; in all things strives t'express,
That all that should dispute with him may know,
Glories, like glow-worms, a far off shine bright
But looked to near, have neither heat nor light. (5.1.4-44)

Mulinassar is a Christian Moor, an experienced general defending Venice and Candy against the Turks, a knowledgeable man, presumably of a certain age, with little heat in the blood, and whose conversation seduces without fail—Othello. In this description as in the rest of the play, while Mulinassar is clearly identified as a Moor, and while he must have been performed in blackface, there is no single hint of diabolism in the imagery used to refer to him—maybe because there are no Iago and Emilia to deploy the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface around him. Or maybe because Mulinassar is not a real Moor: he is the Duke of Florence dressed up as Othello to infiltrate Brachiano's court and execute his revenge against Brachiano and Victoria.

The main effect of the Duke's disguise is to establish a parallelism between this fake Moor and the real Moorish character of Zanche, the maid who serves Vittoria and shares her tragic fate—since both are performed in blackface.[63] While Mulinassar and Zanche look the same, they are treated in radically different ways by the Paduan society. Just a few lines after Mulinassar was introduced to the spectators in the positive terms quoted above, Marcello greets Zanche's entrance by asking his brother Flamineo: "Why does this Devil haunt you?" (5.1.87) The diabolical hermeneutics of blackface are lavishlyly deployed around Zanche throughout the

[63] Webster made sure that the performers would use the same technique to blacken Zanche and Mulinassar's face, by having Zanche declare to him: "He comes. Hence petty thought of my disgrace,/ I never lov'd my complexion till now,/ Cause I may boldly say without a blush,/ I love you." (5.2.234-237) This statement only makes sense for spectators if Mulinassar—a "sun-burnt gentleman," in Flamineo's words—appears to be as dark-skinned as Zanche. Thus, we can safely assume that both characters were performed in blackface.

play, and the juxtaposition of those two Moors, Othello 2.0 and the bedeviled Zanche, together with the fakeness of Mulinassar's identity in the first place, make Othello appear artificial and disconnected from the social realities in which the Zanches of early modern Europe lived. In the next few pages, I show how Webster's play pays tribute to but also indirectly underlines the limits of *Othello*'s engagement with the question of black social integration.

In *The White Devil*, the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface function as a tool not for excluding black Afro-diasporic people from Paduan society altogether, but for excluding some of them (Zanche) from the higher spheres of that society: a tool for maintaining the social hierarchy of that society, which is based upon unfreedom. In the case of black women such as Zanche, as Habib's archival findings suggest, unfreedom meant both economic and sexual exploitation, and Webster's play shows it unflinchingly:

> Marcello: Why doth this Devil haunt you? Say.
>
> Flamineo: I know not.
>
> For by this light I do not conjure for her.
>
> Tis not so great a cunning as men think
>
> To raise the Devil: for here's one up already,
>
> The greatest cunning were to lay him down. (5.1.88-92)

Flamineo's sexual puns in response to his brother's activation of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface bring to light Marcello's real concern: Flamineo, the master of the household, "lays down" regularly with this Devil whom he has promised to marry.[64] And Marcello strongly

[64] Ann Rosalind Jones comments on the power structure that made interclass casual unions frequent in London. She quotes Susanne Amussen: "Abuses were common, even within families, where the intimacy—and relative privacy—of master-servant relations made servants vulnerable. A master could, for instance, rape or seduce a servant without observation by neighbors. Sexual relations between masters and servants involved a double exercise of power—as a master and as a man." (Amussen 159) Moreover, we should not forget that Zanche's potential

disapproves. The reason for his disapproval is to be found in his deep-seated attachment to the social *status quo*. Indeed, a couple of scenes later, Marcello helps us understand that he does not disapprove as much of his brother's sleeping with their servant than of his potential desire to marry her:

> Marcello : You're a strumpet,
> An impudent one.
> Flamineo: Why do you kick her? Say,
> Do you think that she's like a walnut-tree?
> Must she be cudgel'd ere she bear good fruit?
> Marcello: She brags that you shall marry her.
> Flamineo: What then?
> Marcello: I had rather she were pitched upon a stake
> In some new-seeded garden, to affright
> Her fellow crows thence.
> Flamineo: You're a boy, a fool,
> Be guardian to your hound, I am of age.
> Marcello: If I take her near you I'll cut her throat.
> Flamineo: With a fan of feathers?
> Marcello: And for you, I'll whip
> This folly from you. (5.1.211-222)

The image of fruit bearing suggests that Zanche might actually be pregnant by Flamineo. This would explain her eagerness to find a husband quickly in the person of Mulinassar once Flamineo turns her down. Marcello's anxieties surrounding the color of the potential mixed race child to be born crystallize in the metaphor of the walnut tree, for walnut was commonly used as a brown dyeing agent: Zanche has the power to stain the Flamineo's family both literally and figuratively. The punishment that Marcello imagines for Zanche's offense is sexual ("pitched upon a stake" has phallic connotations) but disconnected from reproduction (she is to scare her

---

pregnancy increases her vulnerability at the hands of Flamineo. Rosalind Jones has shown that, when London maids, impregnated by their masters, refused to either abort their pregnancy or impute paternity to another man, they were often sued by their masters for defamation, and lost their employment, which had serious consequences in a time when unemployed unmarried lower class women were considered vagabonds and consequently imprisoned (R. Jones, "Maidservants" 24).

fellow "black crows" whose appetites threaten the fertility of rightfully "seeded" gardens of white European women's wombs). Marcello does not object to interracial sex—neither do Flamineo nor the Duke of Florence who both sleep with Zanche—but he objects to interracial marriage and families. The stain that Marcello dreads comes both from Zanche's ethnic background and from her social station as maid–both color and rank. In that sense, Marcello's desire to preserve the racial purity of his own lineage within the race-as-color paradigm echoes his desire to preserve the racial purity of his lineage within the race-as-rank paradigm—a desire he takes to his grave.[65] Thinking of the dominant and emergent paradigms of the early modern racial matrix analogically, Marcello is the anti-miscegenation voice in the play, and he uses the religious discourse of diabolism to keep Zanche in her place within the social hierarchy.

Being placed at the bottom of the hierarchies created by both racial paradigms as a black maid, Zanche cannot stack one paradigm against the other the way other black characters from the period can (the way Othello uses his noble lineage and his Christianity to counterbalance his blackness, for instance).[66] Her only chance is to bypass the racial matrix entirely, and the only solution she can think of to do is to use the most powerful of miracle-makers: money. She steals money from her mistress, offers it as dowry to a hesitant Mulinassar, and declares: "It is a dowry, / Methinks, should make that sun-burnt proverb false, / And wash the Ethiop white" (5.3.267-269). Zanche bets that if she manages to acquire enough capital, she will no longer read as black.

[65] Marcello's final lines crystallize his attachment to racial purity within the race-as-rank paradigm: "There are some sins which heaven does duly punish, / In a whole family. This it is to rise / By all dishonest means. Let all men know / That tree shall long time keep a steady foot/ Whose branches spread no wilder then the root." (5.1.20-24)

[66] Lara Bovilsky, building upon Ann Rosalind Jones' observation that "Zanche is placed at the absolute bottom of interlocking cultural, racial, gender, and class hierarchies," insists, and rightly so, on the effect of Zanche's class status on her figuration as opposed to Mulinassar's figuration. "Whereas the Moorish general Mulinassar (Francisco in disguise) is admired, Zanche is routinely insulted and mocked; the difference in their treatment is a function not only of her gender and her role as Vittoria's accomplice, but also of her class status as a servant." (Bovilsy 467)

Money might whitewash her. Money might even buy her a husband of noble lineage (albeit in Mauritania). After all, there are precedents: status is what seems to inform the positive general perception of Mulinassar in Padua and Othello in Venice. Mulinassar-Othello's employment in the service of Brachiano is elective, honorable, and, far from exploitative, compensated by a "competent pension." Alas, the military expertise to which Mulinassar-Othello owes his social status is predicated on gender: as a woman, Zanche is confined to the domestic sphere with no hope to acquire social agency—thus, the only solution she can imagine to constitute her dowry is to steal, which criminalizes her. Those two lines in which Zanche describes her blackness as a feature that can be socially constructed and deconstructed point out the inextricable imbrication of class and gender in racial formation—something that is absent from *Othello*.

In short, *The White Devil* pays tribute to *Othello* by placing the rhetoric of diabolism in the mouth of real white devils and by drawing attention to characters' motivations for using the discourse of diabolism (in the case of Marcello). But it puts further pressure on the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface by using theatrical structures leading spectators to wonder why some black characters (Zanche) are demonized while others are not (Othello 2.0)—thereby highlighting issues of class and gender. Webster's play recuperates the main points of *Othello* on the issue of black integration, and pushes further. Taken together, those plays, *Titus Andronicus, Othello, and The White Devil,* show that the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface, which was so popular on the London stage between 1590 and 1620, could be used to exclude black Afro-diasporic characters from European societies or to keep them in their place, at the bottom of European social hierarchies. They also show that some playwrights, while using this trope, were aware that the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface participated in a larger religious rhetoric of demonization that could be wielded off stage against black Afro-diasporic people for a number

of reasons. Finally, they suggest that the hermeneutic configurations of blackface were responsive to social changes. Indeed, by the early 1610s, English society was moving towards accepting the new economic order and the black presence that this profitable economic order required. *The White Devil* suggests that, in the new economic order, a character like Othello—whose blackness remains largely disconnected from issues of class and gender—had no currency any longer. [67]

Those tectonic micro-movements, insensibly shifting the expressive onus of blackface semiotics from anxieties about the possibility of integrating black Africans into a European society to anxieties about the place that black Africans could and should have in that society, were not unique to England. Across the Channel, the French stage trembled too.

4) The Diabolical Hermeneutics of Blackface in Rouen

In 1608, Samuel de Champlain was sent across the Atlantic to found the city of Québec, the most important permanent settlement in Canada, and future head of New France. The same year, Rouen-based Chrétien des Croix wrote *Les Portugaiz Infortunez*, and the anonymous *Tragédie françoize d'un more cruel envers son seigneur nommé Riviery, gentilhomme espagnol, sa demoiselle et ses enfants* followed five years later: both plays would integrate the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface into local conversations about French expansion in the Atlantic world.

Robin Blackburn has shown that "in the long run, the French colonization effort was to depend more on the State and less on the spontaneous impulses of civil society than had been the

[67] Webster seems to be representative of many contemporary English playwrights. Indeed, one is hard pressed to find any Christian African or noble Moor character on the English stage after 1613: they were to be replaced in the 1610s by black pagan maids, who were joined in the 1620s by white female characters going into blackface in order to gain social agency by disguising themselves as pagan black maids.

case with England" (Blackburn 279). However, in the early seventeenth century, the French colonial model still oscillated between private enterprise and State control, and if one city in France had entrepreneurial impulses comparable to the English ones, it was Rouen. Champlain drew a large portion of his capital from Rouen merchants, whose investment in the Québec adventure was probably motivated by the interest in Northern-American furs of the powerful local textile industry.[68] For the same reasons, Rouen was the most important French port for trading with Brazil whence it imported red brazilwood for dyeing purposes. In short, Rouen had its eyes on the Atlantic earlier than the rest of the country.

As we will see, *Les Portugaiz Infortunez* stages conquest in the Indian Ocean, and *Le More cruel* stages slavery in the Mediterranean. Yet, in the late 1600s, Rouen businessmen had the Atlantic on their minds.[69] The importance of the Atlantic for Rouen was reflected in the city's theatrical production. For instance, in 1611, Rouen playwright Georges Duhamel published *Acoubar ou la loyauté trahie, tirée des amours de Pistion et Fortunie en leur voyage de Canada*, the first European play to stage Canada, overtly calling for its colonization by the French. At the same time, the spread of the Black Legend, denouncing the ethically failed Iberian model of colonization, contributed to raising questions about the way French colonization should be conducted. Theatre in Rouen became a platform for discussing not only the desirability, but also the lawfulness, risks, and ideal modalities of a French expansion into the Atlantic.[70] I argue

[68] The city of Québec was founded as a fur post.

[69] Thinking about the Atlantic while staging another maritime space is a common feature of contemporary theatrical representations of America produced by fledgling colonial powers. For instance, Shakespeare's *Tempest* (1611) takes place simultaneously on a Mediterranean island and in the Bermudas.

[70] For a thorough exploration of Rouen theatre's engagement with the lawfulness of colonization, see Toby Wikström's upcoming monograph based on his groundbreaking doctoral dissertation, *Law, Conquest, and Slavery on the French Stage, 1598-1685*. Dissertation, Columbia University, 2010.

that the use of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface in Rouen plays such as *Les Portugaiz Infortunez* and *Le More cruel* raised fresh questions in the ongoing local conversations on colonialism: this cognitive trick impelled spectators to consider whether black African colonial subjects could be integrated into the social fabric of a French Catholic colonial body politic.

This early concern with black African subjects in the Atlantic context may come as a surprise to the extent that, in 1613, France had not yet started its own expansion along the West African coast or in the Caribbean. As I explained in the introduction to this dissertation, however, blackness had already entered the discursive domain in France, to the extent that colonial fantasies had already started developing, and those fantasies were colored by the Iberian experience through which lens France understood Atlantic expansion. That Iberian experience, so defamed, decried, and envied at the same time, had involved mass color-based slavery for over a century and half by 1608. *Le More cruel* stages Spaniards in Mallorca, an island over which Spain was struggling to maintain its control against Barbary Corsairs throughout the early modern period, and *Les Portugaiz Infortunez* stages Portuguese people in the Indian ocean, a region in which Portugal sought to expand its dominion in the sixteenth century. The plays show two paradigmatic European colonial powers (united into the mighty Iberian union at the time the plays were written) involved in the process of empire making, and engaging with black Africans as they do so. Rouen merchants knew that the Atlantic empires with which they wanted to compete needed black African slaves to function. The Iberian experience had indissolubly entangled the ideas of expansion in the Atlantic and economic exploitation of black Afo-diasporic people in the French collective imagination—and the Rouen plays reflect that entanglement.

In 1613, Abraham Cousturier, a major publisher in Rouen—a city which, in the early seventeenth century, published twice as many plays as Paris—published *La Tragédie française d'un More cruel envers son seigneur nommé Riviery, gentilhomme espagnol, sa demoiselle et ses enfants*. This anonymous play was based upon Bandello's twenty-first novella (Part III), which François de Belleforest had translated in French and embellished some fifty years earlier.[71] This play, like several others published by Cousturier, was printed with five woodcuts representing key moments of the plot that have been understood as replicating moments of ideal performance for the play.[72] They represent the character of the Moor with pitch black skin (his facial features are drawn in white), as opposed to the white Spanish characters (Fig.4)—which I read as an attempt at rendering in print the use of *barbouillage* during the performance of the play.[73]

[71] This domestic revenge tragedy has a simple plot: in Mallorca, a Moorish slave, having received a particularly violent beating for no apparent reason at the hand of his Spanish master, decides to wait for the best moment to get his revenge. His master, Riviery, realizing how unfair he has been to his long time slave, decides to make amends by freeing him and keeping him as a free servant in his household. The *More* feigns gratitude. He waits for the day when Riviery goes hunting, leaving his wife and children in the custody of his trusty servant: the *More* sequesters the family inside the master's castle, and pulls up the drawbridge. He first rapes the wife under her children's eyes. The eldest son calls for help, and is heard by a messenger. Alerted by this messenger, Riviery rides back to the castle and begs his former slave to spare the life of his loved ones. From the top of the castle's tower, the *More* promises to do so… if the master cuts off his own nose in front of him—a punishment traditionally reserved to runaway slaves. Desperate, Riviery cuts off his own nose on stage. The *More* laughs at him, breaks his promise, stabs the mother, and throws both children and mother from the top of the tower. He then jumps into the sea, killing himself in order to escape punishment at the hands of Riviery's hunters.

[72] See the work of Sybille Chevalier Micki. Having conducted extensive field research, Chevalier-Micki prefaces the most thorough study of the Rouen theatre industry and scenography to date with a telling disclaimer: "My reflexion is based upon the rare engravings on the front page of the plays published by Abraham Cousturier, which Cousturier presumably engraved himself." (Chevalier Micki 279)

[73] The lack of historical documentation regarding theatrical life in France and in Rouen specifically at that time has prevented scholars to this day from asserting for sure that *Le More cruel* was ever performed. I argue, however, that specific dramaturgic elements hint at performance. Some, such as the long reference to Medea, which is absent from Belleforest's novella, denote a familiarity with long-standing dramatic traditions. Other dramaturgic elements, such as the *mise en abime of* audience dynamics in the scene where Riviery's choric hunters comment on the action of the play, denote an awareness of the audience's presence and role during the performance. Those elements, taken together, suggest that the author of *Le More cruel* was a professional who wrote this play for an audience. Whether this play was performed before or after the text was printed is a question that cannot be answered in the present state of the archive. In either case, the woodcuts attest to the use of blackface on the French stage, as they either recapture an initial performance in blackface, or prescribe such use of blackface for future performances of the play. In the absence of documentation regarding the performance history of the play, I decided to think of the relation between

There might have been another (non-exclusive) explanation for the genealogy of those woodcuts—a transnational explanation. Scholars agree that Bandello's novella about the Moor of Mallorca informed the scene in *Titus Andronicus* when Aaron cheats Titus into cutting his own hand, promising that, in exchange, the emperor shall spare his sons' lives. A father accepts to mutilate himself hoping, but in vain, to save the life of his loved ones: Shakespeare clearly incorporated some of Bandello's material into *Titus Andronicus*—this is yet another crack through which the Spanish racial culture creeps into Shakespeare's Roman play. This explains why English Restoration balladeers, when they transmediated Bandello's novella, saw Aaron in the Moor of Mallorca, and changed the setting of the action from Mallorca to Rome (Fig. 5). Aaron influenced the late English reception of the Moor of Mallorca, but he might very well have also influenced the early French reception of the Moor of Mallorca. Indeed, *Titus Andronicus* was performed almost twenty years before *Le More Cruel*, and, during those years, three quartos of the play, presumably based on Shakespeare's foul papers, had been published.

Due to the lack of documentation regarding theatrical life in France in that period, we are forced to conjecture and to draw conclusions in the subjunctive mood. But it is verisimilar that Abraham Cousturier, one of the most important publishers of playbooks in the theatrical capital of France, Rouen, which also happened to be a most important platform for Anglo-French trade back then, got his hands on a quarto. English travelling actors toured France repeatedly, which helped popularize the English repertoire: an English troupe leased L'Hôtel de Bourgogne in Paris during summer 1598 and Louis XIII's doctor, Héroard, reports that, as a boy, the king had been very impressed with the character of Falstaff during a performance of *Henry IV* at Fontainebleau

---

the printed text (with its woodcuts) and performance as dynamically as possible. I argue that the woodcuts both reflect some of the performance dynamics of blackface, and script future potential performances in blackface.

in September 1604 (Yates 395). *Titus Andronicus* was an extremely popular play in England and abroad: we know that a German adaptation of *Titus Andronicus* was published in 1620 in Leipzig, in a collection of plays performed by travelling English actors, and that Jan Vos adapted *Titus Andronicus* for the Amsterdam theatre in 1638. There is no doubt that the character of Aaron specifically contributed to the popularity of the play abroad: in the German version, all the Goths turn into Ethiopians, and, in the Dutch play, Aaron takes the spotlight, since the title becomes *Aaron and Titus*. In this context, I speculate that Abraham Cousturier had all the reasons, and probably the means, to try and acquire a copy of the text. In this scenario, we can imagine that, when Cousturier received the manuscript of *Le More cruel* a few years later, struck by the similarities between the Moor of Mallorca and the Moor of Rome, he decided to add his own woodcuts, which represented the Moor of Mallorca just like Aaron: with "his soul black like his face" (3.1.205).[74]

In any case, Cousturier's decision to include the woodcuts was a strong intervention. When Belleforest translated and embellished Bandello's story a few years after its original publication, in 1566, he had characterized his protagonist, "A Moorish slave born on the Barbary coast, and a true Barbarian as he proved to be" [*un serf natif de la Barbarie, et vrayement barbare comme assez il feist cognoistre par effec*t] (Belleforest 327), as a "poor tawny man" [pauvre bazané]. The adjective "*basané*" derives from la *basane,* an old synonym for sheep leather that could be red, black, and all shades of brown. When applied metaphorically to human skin, the term referred to various degrees of sun tanning. In other words, Belleforest describes

[74] As we have seen previously, blackface in French commercial theatre was certainly not imported from England, as it derived from strong local traditions of religious theatre. However, the woodcuts of *Le More cruel* suggest that, if blackface became a popular technique in France in the first fifteen years of the seventeenth century, the productivity of the better-developed English theatre industry and of its own favorite performance techniques probably contributed to it.

the color of the *More* with a term that can refer to a broad chromatic range. In the sixteenth century, the term "*basané*" was more flexible than it has become, and flexibility is precisely what enabled this term to encompass a population as ethnically diverse as the Maghrebi population.[75] Belleforest, just like the source texts he used, left the skin tone of his *More* to the reader's imagination in his novella, which is the direct source of *Le More cruel*.[76] Abraham Cousturier ended this tradition when he adorned the playtext with woodcuts that depicted the *More* as unambiguously black. In this, he was following the playtext itself.

For the Moor's behavior is nothing short of diabolical. When he has figured out the way to avenge his wrongs, the Moor calls onto the forces of hell to assist him in his design:

> The hour is near when he shall pay with usurious interest
> For the ills I suffered. Come on in, Pluto,
> Megaera, Tisiphone and her sister Alekto,
> Hasten: I am calling on you all—you all!—
> To assist me in my righteous suit . . .
> If you favor me, I ask that you to come
> Quickly, with thunder and lightning—
> Stinking Megaera, are you lagging
> With your burning torch?
> Come to me too, you screaming ghosts,
> You demons, spirits, and howling dogs of Hell! (3.1.4-14)[77]

[75] Nowadays, "*basané*" is a common racial slur, mainly directed at people of North-African descent, and, by extension, against anyone whose skin tone would qualify as "brown" in the popular American racial terminology.

[76] The historical anecdote upon which the play is based indicates that the original Moor of Mallorca was a native of Maghreb, but no allusion to his skin tone is to be found in the first written account of the story: Giovanni Pontano's treatise *De Obediencia*, written between 1480 and 1494. Bandello wrote in the 1560s a version of the Mallorcan story in which no reference to a particularly dark skin or any other physical feature of the *moro* is to be found either. Pontanius and Bandello could easily have capitalized upon the villain's black skin: the fact that they don't do it suggests that blackness was not part of the anecdote. At the very least, the Italian accounts of the story leave the skin tone of the Moor to their reader's imagination.

[77] "*L'heure assez tost viendra qu'il payera l'usure/ Des maux que j'ai soufferts. Venez donc Pluton,/ Mégère, Tisiphone et sa soeur Allecton,/ Hastez-vous vitement, tous tous je vous appelle/ Pour me tenir escorte à ma juste querelle…/Si je suis favory de vous, je vous requers/ Qu'acourez vitement, et que foudre et esclairs/ Acompagnent vos pas, sus Mégère puante/ Tardes tu à venir avec ta torche ardante:/ Venez à moi aussi, ô fantosmes hurlans,/ Vous demons, vous esprits, vous chiens d'enfer hurlans!"* (3.1.4-14)

The presence of antique hell divinities manifests the influence of humanism in the period. However, the performance techniques used to represent those antique hellish divinities come from Catholic religious theatre: the "screams" and "howls" as well as the group effect of the devils all come from the tradition of mystery play performances.[78] Similarly, "thunder," "lightning," and Megaera's "burning torch" echo the sound effects and pyrotechnics of the medieval *diableries* described by Rabelais and Thiboust. Let us imagine what the audience saw during this invocation: a *More* in blackface surrounded by devils in blackface coming to his rescue. At that moment, blackface bedeviled the *More* in the spectator's mind by materializing the kinship between the vengeful dark-skinned African and the Devils around him.

This kinship is confirmed a few lines later. Indeed, after flinching at the thought of killing Riviery's innocent children to punish their father, the Moor regains determination and exclaims:

> What, will this foul man
>
> Live unpunished for such a cowardly crime*?*
>
> What, will he brag to everyone
>
> That he subjected me to such ignominy
>
> And I don't resent it? Ah! I will sooner turn
>
> Whiter than milk and more crimson than coral! (3.1.33-38).[79]

Playing on the famed impossibility of washing the Ethiop white [*blanchir un More*], the *More* asks spectators to take his blackness as guarantee that he will exact vengeance against the

[78] Those techniques of performance made it into the national thesaurus of proverbs: "*Faire un boucan de tous les diables*" (to make as much noise as all the Devils), "*Faire le diable à quatre*" (to play Devils with your gang).

[79] "*Hé quoi, cet infaict/ Vivra-t-il impuni d'un si lasche forfeit?/ Quoi, se vantera-t-il en toute compagnie/ De m'avoir fait souffrir si grande ignominie/ Et ne m'en ressentir? Plus tôt je seray fait/ Plus blanc et plus vermeil que le corail ou lait!*" (3.1.33-38)

Master's innocent and beloved children—a course of action that likens the *More* to the vengeful Lucifer himself.

The association is reinforced visually in Cousturier's second woodcut where the *More,* with his meek behavior, tricks Riviery into entrusting him with his loved ones despite his wife's better judgment, which is visually rendered by the wife's hand gesture—clearly a gesture of rejection directed at the *More* (Fig.6). Indeed, Cousturier visually frames this scene of rhetorical and performative seduction with a natural setting, at the foot of a large tree, evocative of the iconography of Adam and Eve's temptation in the garden of Eden. This is the only woodcut of the series that does not use the castle as background: this one-time shift draws attention to the symbolical value of the setting for this specific dramatic moment. Riviery and his wife stand as Adam and Eve in the garden, and the undulating posture of the kneeling *More* likens him to the Serpent, seducing Riviery with his lies, and causing the Fall of his family in a horribly literal sense—that sense is illustrated by the last woodcut of the series. Cousturier's woodcut conveys the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface, a performance technique, to the isolated reader.

The *More*'s revenge unfolds, including rape, mutilation, child murders, and gruesome deaths. The play draws unambiguous conclusions from the *More*'s actions:

> Lords and gentlemen, how blind are we
> To hold those nasty Moors as servants,
> A hundred times more treacherous in their cruelty
> Than tigers and lionesses! (5.1.309-312)[80]

[80] "*O nous nous aveuglez gentishommes et seigneurs,/ De tenir ces méchants Mores pour serviteurs/ Desquels la cruauté est cent fois plus félonne/ Que n'est celle d'un tigre ou de quelque lyonne!"* (5.1.309-312)

Delivering those final lines, Riviery follows the opinion expressed by Belleforest that Europeans, and Frenchmen in particular, should not use Moorish slaves, but only resort to nationals as servants.[81] In those final lines, Riviery questions the fitness of *Mores* for slavery when it comes at the cost of a Moorish presence in Christian society. Riviery is echoing Hunter #2 who, during a conversation on the soundness of his course of action, declares: "We should only trust people who share our own Law" [*Il ne faut se fier qu'à ceux de notre loy*] (4.1.39). "Law" is to be understood both in religious and political terms: Hunter #2 implies that, because the *More* is a Muslim, he cannot be trusted with following the laws of Catholic Mallorcan society, and thus constitutes a threat to that society. The diabolical hermeneutics of blackface uses the visual realm to articulate an argument similar to Riviery's and to Hunter #2's: it insinuates that, just like the Devil in religious theatre, the Muslim black *More* threatens to tear apart the social fabric of a Catholic society. Collapsing religion and politics, the play reverberates with the expulsion of Moriscos that unfolded in the Iberian Peninsula at the very time when *Le More cruel* was performed (1609-1614). As it underlines the risks inherent in having black Muslims live in a Christian society, the play seems to register traumatic contemporary events across the Pyreneans, and to import some Spanish concerns with the integrity of the national body politic into France—after all, the play is called *La Tragédie* ***françaize*** *d'un more cruel* (emphasis added).

[81] See Belleforest: "The kingdom of France is blessed where we only recognize freedom, and where slaves are freed" [*Bienheureux pour vray le pais de France où la liberté est seule est recogneue et où les esclaves sont remis en leur pleine deliverance*] (Belleforest 319). In the opening lines of the play, the Moor of Mallorca describes his own bondage as a form of "*extorsion*." In 1613, "*extorsion*," did not mean extortion, but tort (Nicot 272). By using a distinctly legal term to describe his own enslavement as an infringement upon his natural rights, the *More* gives support to scholars like Wikström who have read the play as an attack upon the institution of slavery. In this section, I am arguing that, beyond its reflection on slavery, this play participates in Rouen city's conversation on colonialism by deploying a xenophobic concern for the integrity of the French body politic.

The integrity of the French body politic is not threatened by a black Islamic presence only, but by any non-Catholic black presence.[82] Indeed, we find the same ideological concerns and use of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface at work in the other extant early Rouen play staging black Africans, *Les Portugaiz Infortunez*, by Nicholas Chrétien des Croix, 1608—a play where Islam is entirely absent. This play too is based on a historical anecdote.[83] Des Croix's dramaturgy relates to *Le More cruel* during the scene when the pagan Caffres of Natal attack and strip the shipwrecked Portuguese. Desperate, Leonore de Sepulveda exclaims:

> Ah, diabolical race,
>
> Begotten by Pluto, excrements of the earth!
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Hateful people! Malicious race!
>
> A hundred times more brutal than a furious she-bear! (Des Croix 99).[84]

[82] To see how this concern applied to Protestants and relates to the context of French wars of religions, see Christian Biet's introduction, in *Théâtre de la cruauté et récits sanglants en France (XVIe-XVIIe siècle)*. Paris: Editions Robert Laffont, 2006.

[83] In February 1552, the rich Portuguese galleon of Don Manuel de Sousa y Sepulveda, captain-general of the island fortress of Diu, India, was shipwrecked off the Cape of Good Hope on its way back to Lisbon. Those who survived the shipwreck and could make it to the shore of Natal started walking northward in hope of reaching Mozambique, where their countrymen had established trading posts, and where they might be rescued by another Portuguese ship. The play shows them arriving to the kingdom of Manique, ruled by the Caffre king Mocondez, notoriously hostile towards white-skinned foreigners, whom he considers to be thieves. Despite the Portuguese pleadings for help and hospitality, Mocondez remains firm in his belief that white people coming from the sea are dangerous and inherently evil: "They come from remote lands / to steal our goods and subjugate us too" [*Ils viennent de pays fort eloignez d'ici / Pour emporter nos biens et nous dompter aussi*]. He tricks the Portuguese into yielding their weapons, then orders his men to rob the Portuguese, beat them, and leave them destitute, without food, shelter, weapons, gold, or clothes. Sosa's wife, Leonore, buries herself waist-deep into the ground to hide her shame, and starves to death with her children. Sosa himself, looking for roots or herbs to eat in the forest, is devoured by African beasts. The black continent refuses to feed the appetites of the Portuguese and literally swallows them— like a medieval hellmouth— in this cautionary play against colonial greed.

[84] *"Ha diabolique race / Engeance de Pluton, de la terre excrément*! . . . / *Ha détestable gent! Race malicieuse!/ Plus brutale cent fois qu'une ourse furieuse!"* (Des Croix 99)

Up to that moment, probably under the influence of Montaigne's work, the play had depicted the Caffres with a refreshing amount of respect and cultural relativism. But Leonore's address "*diabolical race*!" puts an end to this humanist stance by activating the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface.

The pagan African priest Serif characterizes the Caffres' attack against Portuguese colonial agents as an example:

> They are fleeing
>
> Strip them all white! Run! Hurry!
>
> Then we will present their spoils to the king:
>
> This punishment will set an example for the others. (Des Croix 100)[85]

Those "others" who might benefit from this "exemple" are the Rouen spectators, of course, and the moral of the play is transparent: black Africans, even when they are emphatically *not* Muslims, are not to be trusted as allies in the process of colonization. [86] The Portuguese who for lack of options, made a deal with them and yielded their weapons to receive hospitality from the Caffre community lost everything—goods, clothes, dignity, and life.[87] While *Le More cruel* shows the dangers of having non-Christian black Afro-diasporic people live in a Christian society, *Les Portugaiz Infortunez* shows the dangers of relying on non-Christian black African

[85] "*Ils se mettent en fuite. / Qu'ils soient tous mis en blanc, courez, despeschez vite / Puis allons presenter leurs dépouilles au Roy / Ce chastiment sera pour d'autres une loy*." (Des Croix 100)

[86] Note that the word "Caffre" comes from the Arabic and means "a non-believer," that is, a non-Muslim.

[87] Christian Biet emphasizes Des Croix's will, informed by Montaigne and Las Casas, to represent Africans as similar to Europeans in nature: "That play cannot be faulted with either idealizing the Savage, or praising Christians: in the play, black and white people are both good and evil, for the behavior of black characters faithfully mimicks that of white characters. Thus, the circumstances that befall those tragic characters becomes an analogy of the fight between European States, for cunning, violence, and interest are common to all." (Biet, "Cafres" 378) Biet's assessment is accurate, and I do not mean to suggest that Des Croix has a demonic conception of Africans; instead, I am arguing that Des Croix deploys the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface to convey the idea that black Africans, because of their cultural difference, threaten to tear apart the social fabric of a Christian society.

allies. In both plays, the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface raises questions about the possibility of integrating non-Christian black subjects into a potential transoceanic colonial French community.[88]

5) The Erotic Hermeneutics of Blackface in Paris

Although there was no such thing as a French colonial empire in the Atlantic during most of the seventeenth century, the interest in Atlantic colonies that had developed early in Rouen did spread to the rest of the country over the course of the following decades. In 1626, Richelieu appointed himself *grand maître et surintendant de la navigation*, and launched a long-term multi-fronted program to revitalize the French navy and take control of the seas. This revitalization originated from a desire to simultaneously increase the State's control over French citizens, and to impose Bourbon France onto the international stage. Indeed, by strengthening the royal navy, Richelieu hoped to crush the power of Huguenot fortified cities (such as La Rochelle) that controlled the French Atlantic coast with the help of their fellow Protestants from England, and to control French citizens who travelled between France and New France unbeknownst to the metropolitan authorities (Dewar 67). At the same time, Richelieu wanted to break the Dutch and English quasi monopoly over maritime trade routes, to eliminate the acts of piracy that plagued the low-performance French merchant ships, and, last but not least, to humble Hapsburg Spain by attacking it at the root of its wealth (and thus at the root of its

[88] Unfortunately, the small number of extant plays from the Rouen archive does not allow us yet to determine whether Nicholas Chrétien des Croix and the author of *Le More cruel* were subverting or abiding by the mainstream way of using the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface at the time. It is only recently that pre-Corneille seventeenth century drama has become a field of inquiry, and one can only hope that the development of this field will bring to light exciting forgotten texts and archives.

imperialism in Europe): its American colonies (Boucher 81).[89] To reach those goals, ordering the construction of a new fleet was necessary, but not sufficient.[90]

Richelieu decided to charter private companies modeled after the English and Dutch joint-stocks companies, a highly efficient business model that was until then foreign to France, and had the advantage of drawing its capital from private investors, not from the State. Historians often underline that, while Richelieu had no colonial passion *per se,* and did not imagine that Atlantic possessions would yield boundless riches to the kingdom, he thought of French expansion in the Atlantic as the only way for France to impose itself on the European stage. Thus, he granted charters and trade monopolies to commercial companies targeting specific overseas areas, such as *La compagnie Rouennaise du Cap du Nord*, (a not surprisingly Rouen-based company which traded with the whole region between the North bank of the Amazon and the Orinoco) and *La compagnie du Cap Vert et du Sénégal* (which traded with West Africa). The first truly colonial company however, was *La Compagnie de St Christophe*, 1626, which looked after the Antilles.[91] Some forty slaves of African descent were brought to the

[89] The French navy was in bad shape. "Richelieu's advisors, such as the knight of Malta Isaac de Rasilly, painted a somber picture. Only one French ship in the Atlantic could challenge the heavyweight Spanish galleons or the sleeker English men-of-war. Foreign corsairs attacked French merchantmen within sight of their homeports. Barbary pirates savaged Mediterranean commerce with impunity. The paralysis of maritime France meant that merchants found it safer to engage engage foreigners, especially the English and Dutch, to handle French commerce. The Dutch transported French salt and wines to the Lowlands and the Baltic and were the real owners of many commercial firms in France's ports, with French nominal owners serving as their agents." (Boucher 81)

[90] "Over the next decade, the cardinal ordered surveys of port facilities, authorized funds for the upkeep of shipyards, and issued new naval regulations. He imported skilled workers, ordered ships from the Netherlands, and revitalized French shipbuilding. By 1642, he had increased the naval budget from one and a half million *livres tournois* . . . to around seven million, giving France some forty galleys in the Mediterranean and fifty large, blue-water ships in the Atlantic." (Boucher 82)

[91] According to Boucher, a company is truly "colonial" and not simply "commercial" when it is involved in the production of the staple commodities that interests it. "In such cases, the state granted property rights, monopoly trading rights for a certain number of years, and other privileges, including the right to maintain private armies and navies. In turn, the company accepted royal sovereignty through the king's right to appoint a lieutenant general and, sometimes, judicial officials. Companies agreed to transport a specific number of colonists, to support missionaries, and to fight the king's wars if called upon." (Boucher 67)

French part of St Kitts from other Caribbean islands that same year, and in 1629, French colonists started importing slaves directly from Africa (Médievielle 116).[92]

In short, in the late 1620s, the French State, in the person of Richelieu, embraced the colonial project, and made no secret of it.[93] I want to suggest that the public stance taken by Richelieu participated in an evolution of mentalities regarding the idea of a French Atlantic expansion, and that this evolution called for a paradigmatic shift in the representation of black Afro-diasporic people on stage. As the theatrical scene moved to Paris, in part under the impulse of Richelieu himself, the proximity between the stage and the siege of power increased, and the concentration of talented theatre professionals in the capital benefitted the development of court theatre.[94] Afro-diasporic characters in blackface became a staple of court ballets in the 1620s, at the same time when they seem to have to have disappeared from the public stage.[95] Court ballets,

---

[92] The importation of slaves from West Africa on a large scale only started in the 1640s, when sugar gradually started replacing tobacco as the crop of choice; the crown only sanctioned French slave trade in 1648; and it is only with the acquisition of St Domingue in the 1660s that French slavery boomed. Until the 1650s, the primary exploitation paradigm in the French Caribbean was indentured servitude. Yet, as previously discussed, in French popular imagination, the exploitation of colonies in the Atlantic was inextricably enmeshed with the idea of owning an enslaved black labor force because of the Iberian model to which fledgling colonial power compared themselves.

[93] Richelieu was the most important associate of the St Christophe Company: he contributed almost a quarter to the company's total capital stock. In 1627, he chartered the most important of all French colonial companies, *La Compagnie de la Nouvelle France*, which administered French North America. Helen Dewar has shown that, for all the seemingly autonomous administration of the *Compagnie de la Nouvelle France*, social structures were so clientelist in the first half of the seventeenth century, that "despite the royal edict that granted some state powers to the company, in fact, Richelieu was the vice-roy of New France, even if he did not bear that title" (Dewar 88).

[94] Richelieu's patronage took several forms. In 1629, he imposed his own acting company on the *Confrérie de la Passion* which owned the only fixed theatre in Paris, *L'Hôtel de Bourgogn*; in 1630, he turned one of the rooms of his palace into a theatre; in 1641, he inaugurated the *Théâtre du Palais-Cardinal*, which we know today as the *Comédie Francaise*. Paris became the theatrical hub of the country under the aegis of playwrights like Alexandre Hardy. The Cardinal had a vision for French theatre. In 1635, he founded the *Société des Cinq Auteurs* (including Pierre Corneille who, emblematically, left Rouen for Paris on this occasion): the *Société* members had to express in dramatic forms the ideas and values that Richelieu wished to convey. Finally, the Abbé d'Aubignac, in the preface to his 1657 *La Pratique du Théâtre*, explains that it is upon Richelieu's commission some twenty years earlier that he started writing the esthetic manifesto that founded the tradition of classical French theatre.

[95] This analysis is provisional since it is based upon the current state of a theatrical archive that will keep growing.

I argue, responded to the court's stance on French expansion in the Atlantic, and functioned as a laboratory, a space where blackface could be rethought, where its semiotics and its politics with relation to black Afro-diasporic people and the French body politic could be reconfigured.

Claude de l'Estoille was a member of the *Société des Cinq Auteurs*: from 1615 to 1640, he collaborated regularly with the official poet for Louis XIII's ballets, René Bordier. In 1626, while Richelieu started taking measures to revitalize the French navy, L'Estoille wrote the verses of *Le Ballet du Naufrage heureux,* which was performed in front of the king. This ballet exemplarily shows the changes that befell the hermeneutics of blackface at court.

The plot of the libretto is minimal: a merchant, whose nationality is not mentioned, first explains to the ladies in the audience, "*les beaux astres de la cour*," that his ship got wrecked:

> The riches of my ships
> Could not be saved
> From the wrath of the wind and the sea.
> Yet I am receiving more precious ware now,
> And I believe that, having found you,
> I have gained more than I have lost.
> My pilot, my sailors,
> And all their passengers will shortly
> Come and pay homage to you. (L'Estoille 3)[96]

Breaking the fourth wall in order to woo the ladies in the audience was a generic requirement in court ballets; in this piece, it serves as narrative thread. In keeping with the merchant's promise, a series of characters enter, dance, woo the Ladies, and exit, according to a serial logic of display. The passengers consist of "a tobacco user" [*un preneur de tobac*]— and the presence of this commodity indicates that the ship was involved in transatlantic trade, placing this ballet in a colonial space—, some "*bourgeois*," and a "a worldly man [*un mondain*]. Then, some of the

[96] "*Du couroux du vent et des eaux/ Les richesses de mes vaisseaux/ N'ont jamais pu estre sauvées;/ Mais un plus grand bien m'est rendu/ Et je croy vous ayant trouvées/ Que j'ay plus gaigné que perdu./ Mon pilote et mes matelots/ Et ceux qu'ils menaient sur les flots/ Viendront bien tost vous rendre homage."* (L'Estoille 3)

fantastic inhabitants of the shore where all those people got shipwrecked decide to woo the Ladies too: we now see "ghosts" [*des fantosmes*], "a madman" [*un furieux*], "an umbrella carrier [*un porteur de parasol*], "Pandorians covers with mirrors" [*des Pandoriens couverts de miroirs*], "men with three faces" [*des hommes à trois visages*], "men dressed with the four elements" [*des hommes vestus des quatre elements*], "little monsters" [*des petits monstres*], and finally, "*les Mores*." We know that those *Mores* stock characters were performed in blackface due to the illustrations with which other ballets starring some *Mores* were published, such as the *Ballet du Grand bal de la douairière de Billebahaut*, also performed in 1626 (Fig.7). The position of the *Mores* in this serial logic is ambiguous: the Moors could belong to the list of monstrous creatures living on the shore where the ship got wrecked, but passengers and "natives" mixed on stage. Thus, the *Mores* could also be part of the ship's cargo whose owner, we know, trades in the Atlantic space, especially given the presence on board of an "umbrella carrier"—a character that was typically painted as black in European early modern iconographic traditions.

Those *Mores* have something in common with all the other characters on stage: in the Petrarchan tradition that permeates Renaissance court cultures, they are "burning" with love for the ladies in the audience. Indeed, the libretto unfurls an obsessive poetics of burning, as the Ladies in the audience seem to set everyone on fire.[97] This poetics explains the position of the *Mores* at the end of the series on display: they are the culmination of this chain, for they bear the

[97] The merchant compares the Ladies to "such beautiful suns" [*de si beaux soleils*] (L'Estoille 3), the tobacco user declares that, with the smoke of his pipe, he "hides the smoke of the flame / that you lighten up in my soul [*je cache celle de la flame/ que vous allumez dans mon âme*] (5), the bourgeois calls those beauties the "beautiful objects of our flames" [*beaux sujets de nos flames*] (6), the umbrella carrier declares that "a beauteous triumphant eye / has turned my heart into ashes" [*un bel oeil vainqueur / a réduit en cendres mon Coeur*] (8), the men with three faces, that "your eyes, universal delight / inflame our courage so" [*vos yeux qui savent tout ravir / enflament si fort nos courages*] (9), and the man dressed with the four elements states that "love's violent flames / have driven the four elements/ outside of those poor lovers' bodies" [l*a violence de ses flames / a chassé les quatre elemens / du corps de ces pauvres amants*] (9).

material mark of burning on their face. In a symbolic system where to love is to burn, characters in blackface covered with soot are the ultimate lovers:

> Unparalleled beauties,
>
> Your eyes, more beauteous than the sun,
>
> Have also wronged us more.
>
> This star is more clement than you:
>
> It has only blackened our faces,
>
> While you have burnt our hearts. (L'Estoille 9-10)[98]

Not content with symbolically mobilizing the ancient understanding of black skin as burnt skin, Claude de l'Estoille revitalizes it by having those *Mores* literally burn on stage. Indeed, immediately after the *Mores*' declaration, an Alchemist enters, whose boastful declarations regarding the extent of his abilities indicate that he is a charlatan, a worthy character of the genre that Mark Franko has called the burlesque court ballet:

> I distill night and day
>
> Waters to make unguents
>
> That can cure by night or day
>
> Anyone who is in good health. (L'Estoille 10)[99]

The Alchemist, moved by the *Mores*' plight, decides to help by re-casting them.[100]

---

[98] "*Beautez à qui rien n'est pareil,/ Vos yeux plus beaux que le soleil/ Plus que luy nous ont fait d'outrages,/ Cet astre a bien moins de rigueurs:/ Il n'a noircy que nos visages,/ Et vous avez bruslé nos coeurs."* (L'Estoille 9-10)

[99] "*Je fais distiller nuit et jour / des eaux pour faire des pomades / qui peuvent guérir nuit et jour / tous ceux qui n'en sont point malades*." (L'Estoille 10)

[100] We can assume, given the non-existence of the fourth wall in court ballets, that the ladies in the audience expressed through body language, laughter, and interjections some of rejection of the *Mores*' compliments, which moved the Alchemist to compassion.

I want to melt in my furnaces
Those miserable lovers,
And I will make those *Mores* more handsome
Than they are ugly now.
I want for them to charm all eyes
And vanquish their mistresses:
Though they be no gods,
They shall possess those goddesses. (L'Estoille 11)[101]

"A dialogue between the Alchemist and the Moors that he melts in his furnace" follows [*Un dialogue de l'Alchimiste et des Mores qu'il fond dans son fourneau*], in which the *Mores* rejoice in the Alchemist's oven, thinking of the pleasures that will ensue from such pains. Their death is not marked by any stage direction, but it is symbolized by the entrance of "a coal bearer" [*le porteur de charbon*], his own face presumably smeared with coal, who brings the *Mores*' hearts on stage, and delivers the final lines of the ballet:

As I carry this coal, I tremble all the time,

And suddenly, all pleasure runs away from me,

For this coal is made of the lovers' hearts

That love burnt the way it burns me now. (L'Estoille 12)[102]

Claude de L'Estoille bases the poetics of his libretto on the idea that black skin is burnt skin, and shows characters in blackface literally burning on stage, but without ever activating the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface.[103] The furnace is not a hellmouth; the Alchemist is not

[101] "*Je veux fondre dans mes fourneaux/ Ces pauvres amants misérables/ Et rendray ces Mores plus beaux,/ Qu'ils ne semblent désagréables./ Je veux que charmant tous les yeux/ Ils soient vainqueurs de leurs maîtresses/ Et bien qu'ils ne soient pas des dieux,/ Ils possèderont ces déessses."* (L'Estoille 11)

[102] "*Portant ce charbon, je tremble à tous moments,/ Et soudain tout plaisir loin de moi se recule;/ Car ce charbon n'est fait que des coeurs des amants / Que l'amour a bruslé comme encore me brusle."* (L'Estoille 12)

[103] One can only wonder whether Claude de l'Estoille's interest in linking the motifs of burning with seduction (rather than with hell) was motivated in part by his biographic details: the court poet had been disfigured for life by fire at age thirteen (Meyers 6).

Lucifer; the *Mores* are not devils. The language of the libretto is unambiguous on this point. This would have been an unforgivable missed dramaturgic occasion some fifteen years earlier, but apparently, at the court of Louis XIII in 1626, this scene did not read as a missed opportunity any longer, because blackface was used and understood differently.

Indeed, court ballets reconfigured blackface semiotics: black was still the color of what was burnt, but the origin of the fire was conceived of in erotic Petrarchan terms, not in religious terms anymore. A new erotic hermeneutics of blackface emerged as popular alternative to the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface in court ballets. In the eye of the spectators, a character in blackface was not black because he was morally fallen, but because he had fallen for the white ladies in the audience. This erotic hermeneutics, exemplarily articulated in *Le Ballet du Naufrage heureux*, can be found in most ballets of the period containing *Mores* in blackface. Emblematically, in *Le Grand ballet des effets de la nature*, 1632, a "*neigre*" tells his "*maîtresse*":

> If the color that I am wearing
>
> Is dark as a coffin
>
> It is because my body is mourning
>
> The loss of its freedom. ("Effets" 206)[104]

The same erotic hermeneutics of blackface in which blackness codes sexual desire can be traced in about thirty extant ballet libretti between 1620 and 1650.[105]

---

[104] "*Si cette couleur que je porte / Est aussi sombre qu'un cercueil;/ C'est que mon corps porte le deuil/ de ce que sa franchise est morte.*" ("Effets" 206)

[105] The erotic hermeneutics of blackface can be traced to performances that precede the 1620s, such as *Pour des Masques assez hideux et sauvages* (1601), or *La Boutade des Maures esclaves d'Amour delivrés par Bacchus* (1609). But it is only in the 1620s that this hermeneutics became a staple of the genre of court ballets.

The diabolical hermeneutics of blackface and the erotic hermeneutics of blackface have a strong kinship, since bedeviled Africans were systematically imagined on stage as lecherous. In that sense the new hermeneutic of blackface was not formed out of thin air: it is a variation on the same motif. To the extent that the court ballet was a space of representation where religion had no traction, *Mores galants* can read as a secularized version of black devils. And yet, those two versions of blackface differ to the extent that the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface opened questions that the erotic hermeneutics of blackface closed. While the former raised the question of the integration of black subjects into a French colonial community in the Atlantic, the latter provided a definitive answer by defining the ideal position of black Africans in this community.

To perceive the ideological work performed by the erotic hermeneutics of blackface, we must focus on the power structure linking the gallant *Mores* to the white ladies in the audience, for the absolute submission of those black characters to their "*maîtresses*" is key. Indeed, the term "*maîtresse*" already had its sexual connotations in 1626, but it also referred to a power structure folded into many court ballets: slavery. While the gallant *Mores* use the rhetoric of courtly love to woo their potential mistresses, they also literally offer themselves as slaves to the French aristocrats in the audience. In *La Boutade des Maures Esclaves d'Amour délivrés par Bacchus* (1609), for instance, the *Mores* eventually conclude: "We are overjoyed and we love our shackles / when we have the honor to wear them for you" [*Nous sommes trop heureux et nous aimons nos chaînes / quand nous avons l'honneur de les porter pour vous*] (*Boutade* 1). This ambiguity, ubiquitous in the ballets of this period, is not just a coincidence in the eye of the

critic: it constitutes a representational strategy that tells a lot about the French relation to color-based slavery in the late 1620s.[106]

To be more specific, in no single ballet do we find an overt representation of slaves or slavery, but in virtually every single ballet displaying *Mores* in blackface, we find this absolute and voluntary erotic submission of the African prince or ambassador to the refined white female aristocrat, and this erotic relation constitutes a displacement of the unrepresentable relation of slavery. The framing of the white master-black slave relation in erotic terms—which, again, is a defining component of the part of the gallan*t More*—allows ballet performances to celebrate French fantasies of becoming a slave-using Atlantic colonial power without explicitly doing so. It is a representational strategy that bypasses the problematic notion of coercion inherent in slavery. In that sense, the gallant *More* and his erotic dynamics of willing submission can be read through the lens of what Stuart Hall calls fetishism: "Fetishism takes us to the field where fantasy intervenes in representation; to the level where what is shown or seen, in representation, can only be understood in relation to what cannot be seen, what cannot be shown. Fetishism involves the substitution of an object for some powerful but forbidden force" (S. Hall, "Spectacle" 266).

Naturally, the erotic dynamic of the gallant *More* is a complex fetish. While a fetish typically displaces a sexual fascination onto a non-sexual object, the erotic dynamic of the gallant *More* displaces the fascination with slavery onto a sexual object, suggesting that at Louis XIII's court, slavery was more taboo than sex. The figure of the gallant *More* in court ballets is a

[106] Sylvie Chalaye was the first scholar to point the importance of court ballets for understanding the history of the racialization of Subsaharan Africans on the French stage. However, I disagree with her on the idea that gallant *Mores* are empty stage figures designed for entertainment purposes "with no relationship whatsoever with the social reality of the black people of that era who were enslaved and torn from Africa to die of exhaustion in the Antilles" (Chalaye 46). A close reading of ballets politics reveals the engagement of those performances with the social reality of slavery, albeit in a sublimated mode.

fetish as defined by Homi Bhabha: a representational technique of displacement that enables the French aristocratic audience to *simultaneously* deny and indulge in fantasies of owning Atlantic colonies modeled after the slavery-based Iberian colonies.[107] As colonial expansion promised to become a reality, the French fantasy of exploiting Afro-diasporic people in the Atlantic egregiously contradicted the national myth of the Freedom Principle that Renaissance jurists such as Jean Bodin had defended.[108] The gallant *More* crystallizes this contradiction: court ballets culture developed an erotic hermeneutics of blackface that could sidestep this contradiction gracefully. *Le Ballet du Naufrage heureux* was danced at the Louvre in the presence of the king to celebrate the colonial policies initiated by the State the same year; in the midst of its celebratory energy, we can discern the cultural shifts to which the semiotic reconfiguration of blackface responded.

Those cultural shifts are even more perceptible in another ballet celebrating Richelieu's maritime policies in the encomiastic mode. Performed on February 25, 1635, *Le Ballet de la Marine*, written by Colletet, provides the reader with an enlightening argument:

> When King Louis' worth and strength had stifled heresy and destroyed the party that had until then fostered our civil wars, this very King, the most just of all sovereigns, wisely advised by the greatest mind who was ever appointed first minister of France, decided to return to his people the peace and riches that misfortunes and internal turmoils had taken from them for too long. To that end, he restored maritime trade, which the sea only denies to those who are too weak to survive off the coast, and, to favor his subjects'

[107] "Fetishism . . . includes disavowal. Disavowal is the strategy by means of which a powerful fascination or desire is both indulged and at the same time denied. It is where what has been tabooed nevertheless manages to find a place of representation. As Homi Bhabha observes, 'it is a non-repressive form of knowledge that allows for the possibility of simultaneously embracing two contradictory beliefs, one official and one secret, one archaic and one progressive, one that allows the myth of origins, the other that articulates difference and division.'" (S. Hall, "Spectacle" 267)

[108] On France's struggle with the Freedom Principle and its own slave-owning practices, see Pierre Boulle. *Race et esclavage dans la France de l'ancien régime*. Paris: Perrin, 2007; and Susan Peabody. *"There Are No Slaves in France": The Political Culture of Race and Slavery in the Ancien Régime.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

> enterprises, he armed a fleet that shortly cleaned all coasts, and freed them from the pirates who used to trouble them. The victories of that fleet did not end there: reaching places that were hardly known of anyone, the fleet distinguished itself in so many triumphant battles that it was rightly made the subject of this ballet, called after it *Ballet of the Navy*. The overture consists of a recitation by Nereids and sea gods who announce to France the return of its glorious ships. The second part is based on the esteem of foreign princes who, awed by the wonders of the greatest king of the world, send their ambassadors to his Majesty to assure him of their everlasting affection. (Colletet 3)[109]

By pairing the revitalization of the country's maritime trade with exploration and colonization ("reaching places that were hardly known of anyone") the ballet dramatizes the rationale behind Richelieu's maritime policies. Not surprisingly, the author, Guillaume Colletet, was a member of the *Société des Cinq Auteurs*. And not surprisingly, both the King and Richelieu attended the performance at *L'Arsenal*, the royal weapons and ammunition storehouse located on a small port right in front of *l'Ile St Louis* on the West bank. *L'Arsenal* had become a suitable place for monthly royal retreats in the age of Henri IV, and had become very fashionable with aristocrats in the age of Louis XIII. Many court ballets were performed in its buildings: with its unabashed celebration of the royal navy's accomplishments*, Le Ballet de la Marine* could not have been performed in a better place than on this highly symbolic military site.

The ballet materializes the French State's fantasies of world domination. Ambassadors

[109] "*Quand la valeur et les armes de Louys eurent estouffé l'hérésie et détruit les forces d'un party qui avait été jusqu'ici la matière de nos guerres civiles, ce mesme roy, le plus juste de tous les monarques, assisté des sages conseils du plus grand esprit qui fut jamais appelé au premier ministère de la France, fit dessein de rendre à ses peuples les richesses et la paix que les malheurs et les troubles intestins leur avaient trop longtemps desrobées. Pour cela, il rétablit le commerce que la mer ne refuse qu'à ceux qui n'ont pas la force de s'y conserver, et, pour se rendre favorable aux entreprises de ses sujets, il fit equipper une flotte de vaisseaux qui en un moment nettoya toutes les costes et les rendit libres de toutes les courses dont les pirates avaient coutumes de les incommoder. Ce ne fit pas là qu'elle borna le cours de ses victoires, mais poussant jusqu'aux lieux qui n'avaient presque été connus de personne, elle se signala avec tant de combats et de triomphes qu'on a pu avec raison en tirer le sujet de ce ballet, à qui l'on donne le nom de la Marine. L'ouverture de la première partie se fait par un récit de Néréides et de dieux marins, qui viennent announcer à la France le retour de ses vaisseaux glorieux, et la seconde est tirée de l'estime des princes estrangers, qui, ravis des merveilles du plus grand Monarque du monde, envoyent porter à sa majesté par la bouche de leurs ambassadeurs, les asseurances d'une affection qu'ils protestent devoir estre inviolable."* (Colletet 3)

from Russia, Persia, China, and Laponia come on stage to pay homage to the king, followed ultimately by Moorish ambassadors in blackface. The ballet is completed by a pageant of ambassadors from the regions over which Louis XIII wanted to expand his control: Pygmies, giants, Americans, Topinambous, and Amazons—who all break the fourth wall to declare their love to the king seated in the audience. In this celebration of French expansionist maritime policies, Africans in blackface are meant to play a crucial part, and the two sets of verses that they deliver bring to light the politics of the erotic hermeneutics of blackface. First, the Moorish ambassador expresses his allegiance to the French king in the form of tribute:

> For *Monsieur* de Sainctot Lardenay,
> Representing a Moorish ambassador:
> I come from the burnt shore that a foamy sea
> Always lashes with its heedless waves
> To see this great king whose glorious fame
> From clime to clime has reached ours.
> I come to offer him all the gold of our empire
> For the conquest he aspires to;
> But my gift is needless, and its very source
> Would be useless to this happy king,
> Since, having Richelieu in his war ship,
> He already owns a priceless treasure. (Colletet 20-21)[110]

Four *Mores* intervene immediately after those lines: they direct their submissive erotic desire towards the white ladies in the audience:

> For *Monsieur* the Count of Brion,
> Representing a *More*:
> O God! What is this sudden change!
> What a prodigy! What an adventure!
> Against the order of nature,
> I am turning *More* in an instant!

[110] "*Pour Monsieur de Sainctot Lardenay, représentant un ambassadeur More: Du rivage bruslé qu'une mer écumeuse/ De flots impétueux va sans cesse battant,/ Je viens vers ce grand roi dont la gloire fameuse/ De climat en climat jusqu'au nostre s'étend./ Je luy viens presenter tout l'or de nostre empire/ Pour la haute conquête où sa valeur aspire;/ Mais mon offrande est vaine, et la source de l'or/ Seroit mesme inutile à cet heureux monarque,/ Puisqu'ayant Richelieu dans sa guerrière barque,/ Il possède en lui seul un immense thrésor*." (Colletet 20-21)

Diana caused this miracle,
For her eyes, despite all obstacles
Have such an effect on me
That the heat of my flame
Has to show on my body
The harm it does to my heart. (Colletet 21)[111]

Here, Colletet exemplarily uses the erotic hermeneutics of blackface: the Count of Brion refers to his black makeup as the result of his own inner flames, and his erotic submission to some Lady in the audience dubbed Diana (the whitest of all goddesses) enables the ballet to talk about color-based slavery between the lines. Unique in *Le Ballet de la marine* is the explicit juxtaposition of the *Mores*' allegiance to the French king and submission to their white mistresses. This juxtaposition suggests that, in court ballets, the ladies in the audience always stood for more than themselves. They stood for France, occasionally competing with the king in this respect.[112] This ballet brings to light the mechanism of double address (to the mistress and to the king) that underlies the erotic hermeneutics of blackface. This mechanism made the erotic hermeneutics of blackface an interactive ideological device that responded to the position of the court on the question of black colonial subjects, and literally interpellated ballets spectators as French proto-colonial agents.

6) Conclusion: Looking South

The little known *Ballet des Proverbes,* which was performed at the Duke's court in Nancy on February 8, 1665, brings to light the continuity across the fragmented story of blackface that

[111] "*Pour Monsieur le comte de Brion, Représentant un More:/ O dieu! Quel subit changement,/ Quel prodige! Quelle aventure!/ Contre l'ordre de la nature,/ Je deviens More en un moment!/ Diane a causé ce miracle,/ Car ses yeux, malgré tout obstacle,/ Font sur moi de si grands efforts/ Qu'il faut que l'ardeur de ma flamme/ Fasse paroistre sur mon corps/ Le mal qu'elle fait dans mon âme*." (Colletet 21)

[112] The gendering of the erotic hermeneutics of blackface, together with its obvious relation to concerns with miscegenation is a complex and fascinating topic, which shall be addressed at length in its own right elsewhere.

early modern theatre archives tell us. Each of the ballet's *entrées* makes a burlesque of a popular proverb, but entrée #13 also recaptures the early modern trajectory of blackface in France:

> "The Devil is not so Black as He is Painted"
>
> A *More*, represented by M. de la Rousselier.
>
> To the Ladies:
>
> If you favored my flames,
>
> I would soon make you see
>
> That I am not, Ladies,
>
> As black as I am painted. ("Proverbes" 19).[113]

Here, M. de la Rousselier, locally known for his licentiousness, simultaneously alludes to the obsolete diabolical hermeneutics of blackface, denies the diabolism of black skin, and uses his own public image to evoke the erotic hermeneutics of blackface. Early modern *barbouillage* carried the weight of its previous occurrences on stage. That weight could be mobilized, ignored, or alluded to, and "Le Ballet des Proverbes" evidences court culture's awareness of the rich discursive possibilities generated by the semiotic history of this performance technique. "Le Ballet des Proverbes" has a kinship with earlier English plays such as *Othello* or *The White Devil* that are so self-conscious about their own use of blackface.

London—Rouen—Paris: three cities with their own distinct theatrical cultures, which responded differently to the social changes befalling England and France and, specifically, to the growing black presence, real or anticipated, within European bodies politic already stretching or

[113] *"Je ne suis pas si diable que je suis noir"/ Un Maure représenté par M. de la Rousselier./ Aux Dames:/ Si vous secondiez mes flames,/ Je vous ferais bientôt voir/ Que je ne suis pas, mesdames,/ Si diable que je suis noir*." ("Proverbes" 19)

about to stretch overseas. On both sides of the Channel, plays that engaged with the question of black integration, such as *Titus Andronicus*, *Le More cruel,* or *Les Portugaiz Infortunez* simultaneously framed the issue in religious terms (through the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface) and read slavery and colonization in the light of an Iberian model that England and France rejected and sought to emulate at the same time.

The question emerges then, whether this convergence between Iberian inspiration and diabolical hermeneutics of blackface—as well as the subsequent attempts at moving beyond the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface—in early seventeenth century plays across the Channel was fortuitous or rooted in a familiarity with Spanish theatrical representations of black Afro-diasporic people. I have mentioned some points of contact between English and French cultures of racial impersonation at the turn of the century, and I will mention more of them in the next chapters. But what about Spanish culture? Did the Rouen playwrights, the London actors, and the Paris ballet-makers know how black Afro-diasporic characters were represented in Iberian theatre? Could it be that English and French theatrical culture, obsessed as they were with the Iberian experience when it came to thinking about colonialism, blackness, and slavery did not know about the Spanish culture of racial impersonation? To be sure, Spanish theatre-makers had already negotiated the issues with which English and French theatres were struggling. Given the chance, contemporary Spanish spectators transported to a theatre in Rouen or in London would probably have found the semiotics of blackface deployed in *Titus Andronicus* or *Le More cruel* eerily familiar, if slightly outdated.

London—Rouen—Paris. Next stop Madrid, via Seville.

CHAPTER 2

"A PEARL AND A BITCH": BLACKFACE IN SPAIN

Ni sobre Dios señor,
Ni sobre negro hay color.
(Oudin, *Refranes* 135)

[There is no lord above the Lord
And no color above black.]

1) Introduction: Love and Theft in Early Modern Spain

In the second book of *El viaje entretenido* (1603), actor, playwright, and company director Agustín de Rojas Villanlandro makes a surprising comparison:

> Do you know what amazes me?
> How can those actors,
> Doing everything they do,
> Have the reputation they have?
> Indeed, there is no *negro* in Spain
> Or slave sold in Algiers
> Who does not live a better life
> Than an actor, if I may say so.
> The slave who is a slave
> Will work all the time,
> All day long,
> But will sleep at night.
> The slave has no one to please
> Except one or two masters,
> And doing what they order,
> The slave does his duty. (Rojas 301)[114]

Rojas contrasts the condition of a slave with the plight of Spanish actors and actresses, who work

[114] "*¿No sabéis de qué me espanto?/ ¿Como estos farsantes pueden,/ Haciendo tanto como hacen,/ Tener la fama que tienen?/ Porque no hay negro en España,/ Ni esclavo en Argel se vende,/ Que no tenga mejor vida/ Que un farsante, si se advierte./ El esclavo que es esclavo/ Quiero que trabaje siempre,/ Por la mañana y la tarde;/ Pero por la noche, duerme/ No tiene a quien contentar,/ Sino a un amo o dos que tiene,/ Y haciendo lo que le Mandan/ Ya cumple con lo que debe."* (Rojas 301)

practically all day and night long trying to please everyone, and he gives a description of an actor's daily schedule that has proved priceless for theatre historians to this day. Rojas' comparison was probably intended as an insensitive joke to exaggerate the hard working conditions of early seventeenth century Spanish actors, and yet, this association of actors with black slaves is strangely resonant with popular contemporary stage practices.

Despite the undisputed numeric importance of the black presence in the Iberian peninsula at the turn of the sixteenth century, there were no professional black actors to be found on the early modern Spanish stage: white actors, men and women, performed black parts in blackface. Those parts, unlike in England or in France, were not few in the theatre of the *Siglo de Oro*; neither were potential performers of color—free, born and raised in Spain, and familiar with local performance culture. We even know that one theatre company owned a black slave. Yet, no Spaniard of color was to be found on stage, despite the widespread appreciation of authentic black musicians and dancers in the country (see Chapter 4). This absence is puzzling. It is the paradox of early modern Spanish theatre to have been so invested in representing black Africans without ever presenting them. Not only was the condition of actors uncomparable with the condition of black slaves; through blackface, blackness constituted the *property* of white actors.

Blackface might erase actual black people, but its presence always attests to a significant black presence in the society where it develops. It is a practice that appeals to white audiences in societies whose population is ethnically diverse and whose order is predicated on an institutionalized color line. Indeed, working on nineteenth century American minstrelsy, Eric Lott defines blackface as

> A simultaneous drawing up and crossing of racial boundaries . . . The very form of blackface acts—an investiture in black bodies—seems a manifestation of the particular

> desire to try on the accents of 'blackness' and demonstrates the permeability of the color line . . . It was crossracial desire that coupled a nearly insupportable fascination and a self-protective derision with respect to black people and their cultural practices, and that made blackface minstrelsy less a sign of absolute white power and control than of panic, anxiety, terror, and pleasure. (Lott 6)

For Lott, it is blackface's ability to simultaneously undermine and reinforce the color line that constitutes most of its appeal for white spectators. Despite what the enduring paucity of race studies in early modern Iberia scholarship might suggest,[115] the dynamics of blackface described by Eric Lott fits like a glove the case of early modern Spain which, given its imperial demographics, was engaged in an intense production of color-based racial classifications (reflected in its lexicography), while the progressive but general racial hybridization of Spanish subject signaled the ubiquity of cross-racial desire.

Lott's analysis suggests that the practice of blackface expressed the affects of early modern Spaniards towards the black Afro-diasporic people that they racialized, and expressed those affects in all their complexity and contradictions—affects that ranged from fear, to loathing, to desire. Blackface, this act of "bodily investiture," is the moment when, within the racialist Spanish society, theatrical embodiment allows for the communal expression of a much

[115] To a large extent, this paucity is linked to the fact that scholars working on identity in early modern Iberia have traditionally focused on the religious paradigm, for race was first articulated in terms of religious difference in late medieval Spain. Several scholars will mention black Africans to insist that "the phenotypical notion of race was emphatically not the main focus for Spaniards in the sixteenth century" (Fuchs, *Passing* 95), or mention them as a mere extension of the *morisco* problem (see Javier Irigoyen-García. *The Spanish Arcadia: Sheep Herding, Pastoral Discourse, and Ethnicity in Early Modern Spain*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014). Baltasar Fra-Molinero wrote in 1995 the first comprehensive monograph on the figure of the black African in Golden age drama, *La Imagen de los negros en el teatro del Siglo de Oro,* in which he shows how the most popular plays of the period starring black protagonists work to construe blackness as inherently associated with slavery. Like Fra-Molinero, I am interested in exposing the mechanisms through which the coupling *negro/esclavo* became natural to seventeenth century Spaniards, but, unlike him, focusing on blackface and audience responses, I analyze those mechanisms in theatrical performances, not only dramatic texts.

more complex and ambivalent white disposition towards black Spaniards than the one expressed in other media. When one understands blackface as a practice created by white affects towards black people and dedicated to expressing those affects, especially in times of racial tensions, the absence of black performers on the early modern Spanish stage stops being a mystery. Given the stage's real investments, black performers would have been simply irrelevant.

In this chapter, I read early modern Spanish blackface as an affectively informed technique of performance, and I use it as a window to look into the racial psyche of early modern Spaniards who defined themselves as white. Naturally, this "white racial psyche" is a construct to the extent that it is not representative of every single white Spaniard's state of mind, but it does reflect a sensibility shared by many nonetheless. Because white affects towards black Spaniards—like any racial affects—were informed by the movements of social history, I argue that the hermeneutic configuration of blackface evolved in keeping with white responses to the transformations of the makeup of early modern Spanish society. Examining the evolution of the hermeneutic configuration of blackface in conjunction with the social history of black Spaniards during the period 1575-1660, I find that blackface was a plastic device which, in the hands of capable and inventive performers and playwrights, managed to express over time a wide range of affects in response to the pressing question of black integration into Spanish society.

Because I aim to highlight the evolution of the hermeneutic configuration of blackface over time, this chapter follows a chronological progression. In the first section, I show that, in the second half of the sixteenth century, Spanish religious theatre deployed what I call the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface around black Afro-diasporic characters in response to a question propped up by the increasing presence of black slaves in the Iberian Peninsula: could those

people possibly be woven into the social fabric of the adamantly Catholic Spanish society?[116] The support that black subjects received from the Catholic Church—especially the Jesuits—across the empire during the second half of the sixteenth century, and which continued until the beginning of the seventeenth century with prominent Catholic figures such as Alonso de Sandoval, grounded the idea that baptized black Africans and Afro-descendants belonged in the body of the Church and thus provided a first answer to the question of black integration.

I move on to the second section of this chapter to show that, starting in the early 1600s, in response to this official stance taken by the religious authorities, the hermeneutic configuration of blackface evolved in the hands of Lope de Vega, from a diabolical hermeneutics to a commodifying hermeneutics that incited spectators to superimpose the image of a precious black commodity, such as ebony or jet, onto the image of black Afro-diasporic people. This evolution denotes an internalization, within the white psyche, of the idea that Spaniards of color were part of the Spanish religious community, but belonged to this community as commodities, that is, as slaves. As such, the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface was an extremely direct and efficient racializing device that upheld the slavery-based socio-economic Spanish order.

In the third section, I dwell a bit more on the 1600-1620 time period, in order to bring up the hitherto untouched issue of the blackface used to protray *mulato* characters—a uniquely Iberian category that has no equivalent in contemporary English and French theatrical cultures. I highlight the fractured nature of the semiotics of *mulato* blackface when in performance, *mulato* characters looked brown, sounded white, and were talked about as black. In the absence of a new hermeneutics specifically tailored to the increasing number of brown Spaniards, theatre-makers

[116] This term is defined and explained in detail in Chapter 1. It refers to a hermeneutic configuration in which, drawing on the spectators' familiarity with blackface in religious theatre, specific cues tricked the spectators' cognitions into superimposing the image of the Devil onto the image of a black African character in blackface.

relied on a bricolage of older racialized languages predicated on an insurmountable black/white divide, which occasioned a hermeneutic crisis in performance. Using the social history of the time, I establish a correlation between the struggle to coin a new space for *mulatos* within the realm of representation on stage, and the struggle to coin a new space for *mulatos* within the realm of the Spanish king off stage. More importantly, I show that the invention of *mulato* characters participates in the early modern Spanish cultural obsession with racial legibility and classification, and I argue that the hermeneutic crisis attached to that character resonates with the threat that real *mulatos* (and other mixed Spaniards) posed to this obsession.

Finally, in the last section of this chapter, I move on the 1620-1650 time period to examine the legacy of the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface created by Lope de Vega. I bring together various forms of imitation of Lope's device, serious earnest imitations as well as burlesque parodies, and I argue that both forms of imitation are indicative of the long-lasting impact of the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface onto seventeenth century Spanish theatrical culture racial impersonation.

2) Splendor and Decline of the Diabolical Hermeneutics of Blackface

The idea of using blackface for Afro-diasporic parts did not originate in Spain: it was imported from Portugal, just like Afro-diasporic slaves themselves at that time. Indeed, under the impulse of Henry the Navigator, in the 1430s, the Portuguese had pushed beyond Cape Bojador, Morocco, which marked the end of the world known to Europeans then. In just ten years, they had reached today's Guinea-Bissau, and, fifty years of West African coastal exploration later, Bartolomeu Dias had reached and passed the Cape of Good Hope, becoming the first European to reach the Indian Ocean from the Atlantic. During those six decades, the Portuguese had

established numerous trading posts on the coast, *feitorias*, which enabled them to bypass Moorish mainland trade intermediaries, making black slave trade on a large scale a particularly lucrative business starting in the 1440s. And so, the Portuguese became Europe's main purveyor of slaves. Spain tried to compete for a while, but the Treaty of Tordesillas secured Portugal's exclusive access to the African coast in 1494, as the Pope, distributing newly discovered lands to Castile and Portugal, granted American territories to Spain (with the exception of Brazil) and African territories to Portugal. The Treaty, however, only confirmed a monopoly that had already been established by the peace of 1479.

With trading posts in Guinea, Cabo Verde, Angola, and Mozambique, Portugal was the sole purveyor of black slaves under the system of the *asiento* that would solidify at the end of the sixteenth century: a system in which the Spanish crown sold monopoly rights over slave trading with specific ports of the empire to foreign private companies for fixed periods. Portuguese traders (who were so crucial to the system of the *asiento* that it took twenty-two years for the system to recover from Spain's loss of Portugal in 1640) dispatched those black slaves in two main Iberian ports: Lisbon and Seville. From those two cities, black slaves spread over the Iberian Peninsula. A 1565 census made slaves approximately 13.5% of the total population in Sevilla, and Manuel Fernández Alvarez estimates that there were 44,000 slaves in Spain by the end of the sixteenth century (qtd. in Weissbourd, "Transnational Genealogies" 142).

The first Europeans to engage in color-based slave trade, the Portuguese were also the first Europeans to develop African stock characters for the stage. The comic dialect spoken by black characters in Spanish *comedias*, *habla de negros* (which I study in detail as blackspeak in Chapter 3), has its origins in the *fala de preto* spoken by Africans in some of the older Portuguese pieces compiled by García de Resende in the *Cancioneiro geral* as early as 1516

(Weber de Kurlat, "el negro" 383). The technique of blackspeak passed into Spanish theatre via the adaptation work done on those Portuguese pieces by the Castilian poet Rodrigo de Reynosa in his *Diálogo de negros*, published on a broadsheet maybe as early as in the 1520s (Weber de Kurlat, "el negro" 386). Indubitably, though, the most influent playwright for the importation of Portuguese black characters into Spanish theatrical culture was the bilingual Gil Vicente, who, according to Fra-Molinero, was the first Iberian playwright to give significant parts to stage *negros* (Fra-Molinero, *Imagen* 24). He was soon imitated by Spanish playwrights such as Diego Sánchez de Badajoz and Juan Pastor (Baranda Leturio 314), as well as Feliciano de Silva and Lope de Rueda.[117] In other words, the emergence of black characters on the Spanish stage at the beginning of the sixteenth century resulted from the simultaneous transnational circulation of Afro-diasporic slaves and slave characters between Portugal and Spain. When Spain absorbed Portugal and the Portuguese colonies in 1580, the circulation of black slaves and cultural models between the two countries naturally increased. The *comedia nueva* blossomed precisely during the sixty years that the Iberian Union lasted, so the development of black parts on the public stage must be understood in the context of increased proximity to Portuguese culture.[118]

Prior to the Iberian Union, in the middle of the sixteenth century, black Afro-diasporic characters had already become a fixture of Spanish theatre, for the diabolical hermeneutics of

[117] In the prologue to *Ocho comedias*, Cervantes confirms the importance of black parts in Lope de Rueda's repertoire. "Plays were dialogues between a couple of shepherd and shepherdesses, like eclogues; they would adorn and lengthen them with two or three entremeses featuring, alternatively a n*egra*, or a ruffian, a fool, or a Biscayan" [*Las comedias eran unos coloquios, como églogas, entre dos o tres pastores y alguna pastora; aderezábanlas y dilatábanlas con dos o tres entremeses, ya de negra, ya de rufián, ya de bobo y ya de vizcaíno*]. (Cervantes, *Ocho comedias* fol. IIv)

[118] *Comedia nueva* is the theatrical format devised by Lope de Vega in his 1609 treatise *El arte Nuevo de hacer comedias*: fixing a set length, form, and meter, and defending the tragicomic principle, Lope devised a dramatic format that would remain the standard of Spanish theatre until the nineteenth century.

blackface had become part of Spanish religious theatrical culture. Indeed, several plays in the *Códice de autos viejos* suggest that Spanish theatre used the semiotic leverage of blackface to conflate devils and Africans decades before English and French theatres did.

The *Códice* is the largest extant compilation of Castilian medieval theatre (96 plays); it is generally accepted that this compilation was made by a professional company manager, presumably Alonso de Cisneros, between 1550 and 1575, and, consequently, that the plays of the *Códice* reflect an early modern understanding of medieval theatre. In many of those plays, sixteenth century theatrical practices are superimposed onto medieval dramaturgic traditions: such superimpositions apply in particular to the description of stage devils.[119] For instance, in the anonymous "Aucto de la paciencia de Job," as part of his efforts to ruin Job, the Devil tries to seduce his servant and to take him into his own service. The servant, one of the most beloved stock characters of Spanish theatre, Bobo, the Fool, is intrigued by his potential new master's appearance, and asks:

> Bobo: Tell me, good sir, where were you born?
> Satan: Why do you ask? Do I look bad to you?
> Bobo: Not so good either. You look all burned by
> The sun or the air, and you don't mind
> Walking around without a shirt.
> Satan: Why shouldn't I, shepherd boy?
> Bobo: Ha, you're handsome. What short garments!
> Are you from the court or from Guinea? ("Aucto" 464r)[120]

Bobo, whose foolishness is rooted in a solid lower class common sense, immediately links the blackened skin of the Devil exposed by his short garments to the blackness of Africans. Indeed,

[119] Representations of devils in Spanish theatre prior to the *Códice de autos viejos* are lost to us.

[120] "*Bobo:Y diga señor¿Donde nació?/ Satan:¿Porque me lo preguntas?¿Parezcóte mal?/ Bobo: Ni aún muy bien tampoco. Quemado venís/ Del sol ó del aire, y ansina os sofrís/ Andar sin camisa./ Satan: ¿Porque no, zagal?/ Bobo: A fe, sois hermoso. ¡Que corto vestis!/ ¿Sois cortesano, ó sois de Guinea?"* ("Aucto" 464r)

by the second half of the sixteenth century, *Guinea* had become a synecdoche for sub-Saharan West Africa where Iberian traders purchased black slaves *en masse*. The term *Guinea* emerged as a result of fifteenth century Iberian slave trade, and its insertion into Bobo's mouth is one of the many ways in which early modern culture inscribes itself over medieval materials in the C*ódice*. Early modern conceptions of Africa and Africans seem to permeate this "Aucto de la paciencia de Job."

Later in the same scene, Bobo mentions Satan's long horns: those make him kin with the devils of French miracles, mystery plays, and *diableries.* At the same time, this alignment of the Devil with his French medieval counterparts is disrupted by the fact that Bobo's perception of Satan's blackface is uniquely racialized:

> Bobo: And what is your name, good Sir?
> Satan*:* I am Satan.
> Bobo*:* That's a fancy name: will I get a livery over there?
> Satan: Serve me, brother, and you'll wear good clothes.
> Satan: Brother? You? If my mother ever bore one like you
> Let me die with clothes and boots on!
> My mother was white, and you are very dark
> She was perfect, and you are thick-lipped
> . . . . . .
> No, mister Satan, you have been deceived:
> I'd rather believe that a tailless cat bore you. ("Aucto" 464r)[121]

Here, Bobo is using keywords ("*Guinea*," "*tapetado*," and the wonderful neologism "*boquicumplido*") to conflate the negatively inflected image of a black man with the image of the Devil in the spectators' minds.

[121] "*Bobo: ¿Y cómo se llama, señor?/ Satan: Satanás./ Bobo: Pulido es el nombre: y allá ¿dan librea?/ Satan: Sírveme, hermano, que bien vestirás./ Bobo: ¿Mi hermano soís vos? Si tal ha parido/ Mi madre, yo muera vestido y calzado./ Mi madre era blanca, vos sois tapetado;/ La otra rodunda, vos boquicumplido…/ Señor Satanás, vivís engañado:/ Más creo que soís hijo de gato rabon."* ("Aucto" 464r)

We can partially reconstruct the looks of those Africanized devils on stage and the techniques used by performers to represent them based on a 1525 record of a black dance directed by Bautista de Valvidieso and Juan Correa during the procession of the Assumption.[122] This record lists the expenses that Valvidieso and Correa incurred for the performance: they submitted it to the chapter of the Toledo Cathedral in order to get paid. This receipt is the oldest record of Spanish blackface that we have, and it can help reconstruct sixteenth century technologies of blackface: "Glue, cloth, and bran to make the *negros'* masks: 1 *real* and 6 *maravedis.* 4 ounces of wax to wax those masks: ½ *real*" (qtd. in Cotarelo CLXXII).[123] The list suggests that those black masks had a soft cloth basis that could easily adapt to performers' individual facial bone structure. That basis was probably covered with glue in order to attach the bran. The final waxing of the mask then would ensure that the bran did not fall off when the actors had to move briskly (which was often the case, since black characters in pieces like Valdieso and Correa's were expected to dance most of the time, as we shall see in Chapter 4). Thus, the "thick lips" of the black devil mentioned by Bobo were probably a built-in feature of those masks, in keeping with a somatic and idealogical fixation on the fuller lips of Africans and Afro-descendants to which I will return in Chapter 3.[124]

---

[122] Although Valvidieso and Correa's piece was designed as street performance, it was nevertheless associated with a crucial religious celebration, and, as such, mots probably infused with some of the performance conventions of religious theatre.

[123] "*De cola y de trapos y arija para hacer las máscaras de los negros, 1 real y 6 maravedises. De cera para encerar esas dichas máscaras, 4 Onzas, ½ real."* (qtd. in Cotarelo CLXXII)

[124] Black masks would remain in use in the seventeenth century, mostly in the genre of the *entremés*. Indeed, masks, easier to put on and off than makeup, were typically used in plays that required fast-paced racial transformations, such as *entremeses*. For instance, in *El entremés del platillo* by Simón Aguado, performed in Granada in 1602, such a transformation has to take place in two minutes. This *entremés* features endearing thieves who decide to rob an *indiano*—a *nouveau riche* involved in American colonial ventures, and a stock character that seventeenth century audiences loved to hate. The thieves pass as professional dancers, perform in the *indiano*'s house, only to raid the house and disappear between two acts. The servant discovers that the thieves have fled with many of his master's commodities, and, as they call the sheriff, the thieves re-enter. The *indiano*'s comment on the performers' intentions

As for the "burnt skin" mentioned by Bobo, the 1525 record is also illuminating: "For painting the wagons and the 4 *negros* masks, as well as for the pitch used to dye legs and arms, the painter took 1 ducat . . . Eggs and oil used to attach the black pitch to arms and legs: 3 *blancas* for 7 eggs, and 2 *maravedis* worth of oil, which makes a total of 14 maravedis" (qtd. in Cotarelo CLXXII).[125] Black devil performers would put masks on their face, but they would blacken the skin of their arms and legs black with a paste made of eggs, oil, and pitch. This technique differs from the English practice of blackface, which dyes the face, but covers legs, arms, and hands with cloth.

Finally, the 1525 Toledo record gives us information about the wigs worn by performers: "three little bonnets made of little black ropes. For the leather and the rest: 2 *reales* and 10 *maravedis."*[126] One can only imagine that those "bonnets" were in fact wigs: the leather foundation sported "little black ropes," probably in an attempt to render the aspect of African braids—a strategy that differs from the use of short wool on English wigs and reflects a greater familiarity with or interest in black hairstyles. Since those wigs were, according to the record,

---

turns out to be true: the thieves have changed costumes to escape —"Enter the thieves with their women, dressed as singing *negros"* [*Salen los ladrones y las mujeres vestidos de negros cantando*] (Aguado, "platillo" 230). The thieves are, in fact, doing a black act, well enough to fool everybody and to distract the sheriff, enchanted as he is by black music and black dancing. This *entremés* calls attention metatheatrically to the duration of costume changing, and requires itself a very past-paced change of costumes from its performers. In this case, the thieves quickly put on masks to perform blackface. This scenario recurs in the anonymous *entremés de los Negros de Santo Tomé,* published in 1609, whose plot line is very close to the *Entremés del platillo*. Thieves, about to be discovered by the sheriff, disguise themselves as black people so as to flee the police, dancing a black dance. The stage directions give us rare evidence that this change of costume was performed with masks: "Enter the other thief with a bundle containing *Negros*' masks, bonnets, and little drums" [*Sale el otro ladrón, con un lio, con unas mascaras de negros, y sus bonetes y tamborillos*] ("Santo Tomé" 138).

[125] "*Llevó el pintor para pintar los carros y cuatro máscaras de negros, y por el betún para Teñir las piernas y los brazos, un ducado … De huevos y aceite para sentar el betún negro En las piernas y los brazos: 7 huevos á 3 Blancas, y 2 maravedises de aceite, que montan 14 maravedises."* (qtd. in Cotarelo CLXXII)

[126] "*De tres bonetillos de cordecitas negras, por Cuero y todo, 2 reales y 10 maradevises."* (Ibid.)

almost twice as expensive as the masks themselves, we can assume that hair was at least as important as skin color for the early modern Spanish producers and consumers of blackface.

The description of black devils in the *Códice de autos viejos* illustrates the inseparability of black African characters from the social context of slavery in early modern Iberian culture. Indeed, María Luisa Mateo Alcalá has shown that the devils identified as ethnically black [*de raza negra*] in the *Códice* are often portrayed in a position of servitude: "in their hellish world, they function as servants to their diabolical lords, thus promising, perhaps, slavery to whoever yields to sin" (Mateo Alcalá 180). In the *Farsa del triunfo del sacramento*, for instance *Pecado,* Sin, is described by State of Innocence as a *"negrillo*" or "*negrito*." when he first appears on stage, *Pecado* is clearly described as the servant of *Soberbia*, Pride, who orders him to capture State of Innocence. *Pecado*, however, is reluctant to fulfill the task, not out of moral qualms, but because, in his own words, he is "a timid coward with little heart." After upbraiding him copiously, Pride forces him to execute the mission, by placing him under the surveillance of *Engaño*, Deceit (Mateo Alcalá 181-182). *Pecado* the *negrillo* is thus described as a lazy subaltern devil that must be coerced into labor. The world of devils resembles the world of men. The play is not only injecting the contemporary image of a black man from *Guinea* into medieval material: it is also injecting the power structure and social organization in which real early modern black Iberian slaves lived. Just as it would a few decades later in England and in France, the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface expressed and articulated in religious terms white anxieties concerning the ongoing growth of the black slave population in the Iberian Peninsula and the possibility of absorbing this population into the fabric of a society that adamantly defined

itself as Catholic, having traditionally understood belonging, integration, exclusion, and expulsion in religious terms.[127]

However, the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface would not last for long in Spain. Indeed, one is hard pressed to find Africanized devils or bedeviled Africans in plays posterior to the *Códice:* the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface would soon disappear, both for esthetic and ideological reasons. Esthetic reasons first. Devils are hardly Africanized any longer in seventeenth century religious theatre. Teresa Ferrer Valls explains that "the dimension of the Devil that was carnivalesque, popular, ugly, joking, amusing, playful, irreverential and likeable was lost in seventeenth century drama" (Ferrer Valls, "dos caras" 323). Since black Afro-diasporic stock characters had entered theatrical culture as comedic characters (due largely to their lower class social status in Iberian societies), serious devils in seventeenth century *autos* could hardly remain associated with them. Moreover, as Peter Anthony has shown, in Calderón'a *autos sacramentales,* the Devil specializes increasingly in deceiving humans, rather than terrifying or amusing them. Being a shape-shifter, the Devil would take the appearance of whomever his victim was most likely to trust. He often appears as a beautiful woman, a hermit, a shepherd, a dead person, a confidant—but his most popular costume on the seventeenth century

[127] Here I am contradicting the argument made by John Beusterien in *An Eye on Race: Perspectives from Theater in Imperial Spain*. John Beusterien's book contrasts two competing yet allied forms of racialization in early seventeenth century theatre: a "narrativized" form of racialization working to exclude Spaniards of Jewish or Muslim ancestry (based on a pre-existing cultural and socio-religious discourse), and an emerging "de-narrativized" form of racialization working to exclude Afro-Spaniards (based on self-evident physical difference)—the latter requiring blackface. While I agree with Beusterien that the theatrical production of the time expresses a self-aware "white gaze" that defines itself as neither Jewish nor Muslim nor Black (I refer to it as "white psyche") it is my contention that the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface, the association of Africans with the Devil, does endow black Africans with a "socio-religious" discourse of their own. I argue that the racialization that affects Afro-diasporic people in early modern Spanish theatre is narrativized, and its narrativization is re-enacted on stage in every play that uses the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface. This chapter explains how and why blackface *became* a denarrativized technique of racialization at the beginning of the seventeenth century, as the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface became residual, in the sense of the term defined by Raymond Williams.

stage seems to have been the costume of the *galán,* the tempter *par excellence* (Checca 129). Seventeenth century Spanish religious theatre emphasized the idea that the Devil walks the earth among us, and that, most of the time, we don't recognize him; in this perspective, giving him the extremely recognizable aspect of an African man would have been counter-productive. Second, as Arsenio Moreno Mendoza confirms, there are no substantially bedeviled Africans to be found in *comedias nuevas* (Moreno Mendoza 152), whether they be predominantly comedic or tragic. The disappearance of bedeviled Africans and Africanized devils from Spanish theatrical culture around 1590 stands in stark contrast with France and England, where the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface started blooming on the public stage around the same time.

A crucial factor in accounting for the disappearance of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface in 1590s Spain is the increasing insistence of the Catholic authorities on the Christianity of black Afro-diasporic people in the Iberian empire at the turn of the sixteenth century. All branches of Christianity in the early modern period thought of baptism as a sacrament that had the virtue of cleansing a person's soul of past sins, regardless of their particulars—the Catholic Church was no exception. In 1569, the King wrote to the archbishop of Lima that he had received certain reports from Peru according to which, in the colony, black slaves were neither baptized nor catechized, and he asked the archbishop to attend to the religious education of black slaves with as much zeal as he attended to the religious education of Indians (Ares Queija 471). Berta Ares Queija hypothesizes that the reports received by the King came from Jesuits, for Jesuits had focused their proselytizing efforts on the black community as soon as they had arrived in Peru in 1568. Converting slaves was a necessity, for bringing true Faith to heathens was the official justification of slavery and imperial expansion. Indeed, the importance of spreading Catholicism was often invoked as ethical cover for the economic

imperative of replenishing the imperial labor force after Charles V and Pope Paul III forbade the enslavement of Indians in the 1530s.[128]

Jesuits were already at work, proselytizing among black slaves in the Spanish colonies in the 1560s, and it is in the wake of this long-standing missionary activity directed towards black slaves that we must understand the most famous repository of Jesuit black rhetoric: *De instauranda aethiopum salute*, by Alonso de Sandoval, who spent his life baptizing and catechizing some 40,000 black slaves in Cartagena de las Indias, Colombia. This is a unique 600-page compendium of nearly everything early modern Spaniards knew about African and Afro-diasporic people. It was first printed in Seville in 1627, and then reprinted in Madrid with significant changes in 1647 (a re-printing that bears witness to the popularity of the treatise). Those late edition dates should not fool us: Sandoval started working in the "*negros*' ministry" [*ministerio de los morenos*] in 1607, and his *De instauranda aethiopum salute* formalizes twenty years of thinking and preaching, which did not form in a vacuum, but in a Jesuit missionary intellectual tradition that had itself started in the 1560s. In other words, Sandoval's book was first published in 1627, but it is the culmination of a late sixteenth century Jesuit sensibility.

Sandoval belonged to a community concerned with the lack of proper Christian education with which most Afro-diasporic slaves arrived in the Indies. Indeed, since Charles I of Spain, soon to become Charles V, had decreed in 1518 that slaves brought to the colonies directly from Africa (without transiting through the Peninsula) had to become Christian by the time they reached the Indies, black slaves had to be baptized before Iberians could purchase

[128] Baltasar Fra-Molinero points out that fifteenth century Portuguese apologists such as Eanes de Zurara and Duarte Pacheco de Pereira already justified the slave trade with this religious argument (Fra-Molinero, *Imagen* 11). One can only imagine that, with the massification of the slave trade during the following century, the need to bolster this apostolic defense for the practice of slavery became urgent enough for Jesuits, among others, to step in.

them, which often led slave traders to expedite baptisms in Africa in ways that, according to the Jesuit Sandoval, emptied the sacrament of its meaning. *De instauranda aethiopum salute* was meant to solve this problem. The book exhaustively compiles ethnographic, theological, and social data about Afro-diasporic people in the Iberian empire, and offers a method for properly catechizing and baptizing black slaves. Sandoval's goal is simple: to save the souls of black slaves and restore their spiritual health by including them into the imperial Catholic community. In his Prologue to the Reader, he states:

> Our Lord Jesus Christ had great esteem for those people [*negros*], showing us that his majesty can and will set fire to charcoals and turn them into live coals that radiate light . . . For as the Incognito says, souls that are black with sin, God beautifies them with the light and clarity of grace . . . Since the souls of those black and miserable sinners are so black that they can easily compare with charcoals: it seems that His radiance and divine fire burn with more strength and efficiency when they inflame and convert those dark ugly coals into fine rubies. (Sandoval, *De Instauranda* para.4)[129]

Conversion is both a spiritual and chemical transformation here, from coal into rubies. Sandoval is running a quaint baroque metaphor: because black people are "charcoal," they can easily burn with the flame of the Catholic God. In order to promote the baptism and catechizing of slaves, Sandoval is suggesting that Afro-diasporic people will make *exceptionally* good members of the imperial Catholic community—if missionary readers apply the Jesuit method he is offering.

---

[129] *"La estima grande que Christo señor nuestro hizo de semejante gente mostrandonos que de carbones frios sabe y puede su majestad hacer brasas incendidas, y que alumbren . . . Que como declara el Incognito, las almas negras por el pecado las hermosea Dios con la luz y claridad de la gracia . . . Pero como las almos de estos negros y miserablse pecadores estan tan negras, que le pueden comparar muy bien con los carbones, parece que este resplandor y fuego divino se emprendio con mas fuerza y efficacia encendiendo y convirtiendo sus feos y obscuros carbones en finos carbuncos."* (Sandoval, *De Instauranda* para.4)

The influence of this idea onto theatrical culture is patent when we compare this passage to an excerpt from Lope de Vega's little-known Saint play *El negro de mejor amo*, written between 1599 and 1603. In this play, Antiobo, the black son of the Moorish prince of Algiers and a beautiful Ethiopian princess, having had a Christian nurse as a child, takes pity upon the Christian captives in Algiers, turns upon his family and kingdom, and returns the Christian captives to Sardinia. There, he settles down, converts, becomes a saint, and dies, sacrificing himself to save Sardinia from Turkish invasions. In Act 2 scene 3, Antiobo states his faith in the following terms:

> [I am] not stained, but rather cleansed
> By the blood of one, who, despite my blackness
> Has paid the ransom for my redemption.
> God made me of coal
> So that even the tiniest spark
> Of His holy inspiration
> Might set my heart ablaze
> In an instant. (Lope, *Mejor amo* 94)[130]

Lope de Vega could not possibly have read Sandoval's Prologue at the time he wrote this scene, but the striking resemblance between the two passages confirms that the ideologically-charged imagery of the blazing charcoal on which Sandoval drew pre-existed his work, and that it was popular enough, by the end of the sixteenth century, to find its way on stage.

Sandoval recuperates the rhetoric of soul-cleansing inherent in the theology of Christian baptism for the benefit of a specific population whose blackness was perceived as a physical manifestation of its moral fallenness. "Let this text that I am writing be the excess of cloth with which Christ's zealous imitators won't find it repellent to wash the feet of the world, that is

[130] "*Tiznado no, mas lavado/ De su sangre, de quien fui/ Aunque negro, rescatado/ Hizome Dios de carbon/ Para que emprendiese luego/ Más presto en mi corazón/ Cualquier centella de fuego/ De su santa inspiración*." (Lope, *mejor amo* 94)

negros, for their souls are no less precious than the whitest people's souls" (Sandoval, *De Instauranda* para. 2).[131] Sandoval is stating that his method for truly catechizing and baptizing Africans is a tool for washing them white. In one of the "*Approbaciones"* that precede the text of the 1627 Sevillian edition, father Vicente Imperial, a Jesuit preacher, proves that this dimension of Sandoval's work was transparent to his readers: for Imperial, the point of Sandoval's work is

> Not to change the color of their bodies, but to make the face of their souls uniquely white with Grace so that, full of admiration, we might say about this black nation, once it is healed by all those means: *Quae est ista, quae ascendit de deserto* . . . It is to whiten their many souls and to free them from the blackness of sin, that Father Alonso de Sandoval wrote this book. (Sandoval, *Naturaleza* 5)[132]

Religious authorities did not insist on validating the Catholicism of converted Africans solely in the colonies, but also in the metropole. For instance, between 1613 and 1614, the archbishop of Seville, Pedro de Castro y Quiñones, who was also a jurist, asked for the testimonies of several slave-ship captains regarding the way slaves were baptized along the Guinea river and the Cacheo river before being purchased. Those testimonies led him to the same conclusions as Sandoval (with whom he may have been corresponding at the time). That is, African slaves were baptized without giving their consent, without receiving any catechism, and without receiving any explanation about the meaning of baptism in a language they could

---

[131] "*Sea pues esto que escrivo este lienzo sobrado, y sirva para que tomandolo en las manos el zeloso imitador de Christo, no tenga asco de limpiar los pies del mundo que son los Negros, pues ni sus almas son menos preciosas que las de los muy Blancos."* (Sandoval, *De Instauranda* para.2)

[132] *"Mudar, sino la tez del cuerpo, el rostro del alma en singular blancura de la gracia; de forma, que con admiración digamos desta nación negra, remediada con tantos medios: Quae est ista, quae ascendit de deserto: donde los Setenta leen: Quae est lista, quae ascendit dealbata. Para blanquear tantas almas, y librarlas de la fea negrura del pecado, se compuso y ordenó este libro por el Padre Alonso de Sandoval."* (Sandoval, *Naturaleza* 5)

understand. Thus, in 1614, the archbishop of the blackest city of Europe published an edict ordering all the curates of his archdiocese to question all the black people in their parishes about their baptism. The edict was accompanied by another document giving a method for conducting the interrogation (Ares Queija 480). Many Africans received baptism anew based on the result of this investigation, and they came to be known as "*rebautizados*" [the re-baptized]. The timing of the massive (re-)conversion operation launched by the archbishop of Seville suggests that it may have had to do with anxieties generated by the rhetoric accompanying the ongoing expulsion of Moriscos (1609-1614), but it was also informed by the sixteenth century Jesuit discourse on *negros*.

It is in this context of continued insistence of the Catholic authorities on the validity of black Christianity that the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface disappeared from the Spanish stage. Because a majority of the *comedias* written after 1590 starring black characters have their action set either in Spain or in the Spanish empire, they show Afro-diasporic people that have been baptized and thus are part of the Catholic community and part of the same body politic as *comedia* spectators (albeit in a subaltern position). The fact that the black characters paraded on stage emphatically belonged to the same religious community as spectators must have made it difficult to demonize them any longer. If the Devil is the one who cannot be assimilated and always threatens to tear the social fabric of a Christian society, Catholic Afro-Spaniards could not read as devils any longer. I argue that the conception of Catholic African souls championed by the Jesuits in the second half of the sixteenth century and most famously encapsulated a little later by Castro de Quiñones and Alonso de Sandoval, played a significant part in the decline of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface at the turn of the sixteenth century.

This decline was not a complete disappearance, however, and the language of the

diabolical could still be found associated with black characters well into the seventeenth century. In María de Zayas' novella *El prevenido engañado*, for instance, a *negro* is described as "so ugly and hideous . . . even more so than the Devil himself" [*tan feo y abominable, que…le pareció que el demonio no podia serlo tanto*] (Zayas 78). In other words, the conception of blackness as satanic, together with its cognate in the realm of theatrical performance, the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface, became residual cultural elements, as Raymond Williams defines the term: "effective elements of the present" formed in the past, whose "meanings and values cannot be expressed or verified in terms of the dominant culture," but which are "nevertheless lived and practiced on the basis of the residue—cultural as well as social—of some previous social and cultural institution or formation" (Williams 122).

The relegation of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface to the residual sphere is particularly visible in the plays of Lope de Vega, for his *comedias nuevas* emphasize the disconnection between black Afro-diasporic people skin color and the color of their souls. Undermining attempts at moralizing physiological blackness, this move preempts the use of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface. Lope does makes this move most exemplarily in *El santo negro Rosambuco de la ciudad de Palermo* (written circa 1607) and *La Vitoria de la honra* (written circa 1612), in which he frames blackface as a theatrical practice deploying itself outside of the moral sphere. By playing on the relation between blackface and whiteface, those plays dramatize a religiously informed disconnection between black skin and morality that the audience could not possibly miss.

El santo negro dramatizes the life of St Benedict the Moor, a well known sixteenth century Sicilian Saint and patron Saint amongst African-American Catholics today. Needless to say, in the early modern period, Sicily was part of the Spanish empire. In Lope's play,

Rosambuco, a Turkish Ethiop captured at sea, becomes a slave in the household of a Sicilian gentleman, Lesbio, and, following a number of supernatural injunctions by Christ and St Benedict himself, he converts to Catholicism. Signs suggest early on that he has been chosen by God to manifest His glory, and so, Rosambuco joins the Franciscan monastery Jesus del Monte. Following the pattern initiated in *El negro de mejor amo* by which all subsequent black saint plays would abide, *El santo negro* disconnects its convert protagonist's physical blackness from his soul. [133]

Rosambuco is initially described as particularly dark-skinned, darker than most black Afro-diasporic people on stage—even darker than jet [*azabache*]. To achieve this effect, the lead actor must have been covered with a conspicuously thick and dark layer of blackface. Indeed, the technology of blackface had evoled since the sixteenth century, and *comedias nuevas* had relinquished black masks together with the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface: instead, performers wore make-up. This make-up is usually referred to as "soot" [*tizna*] in stage directions, to which indirect stage directions, in the case of the extra-dark Rosambuco, add "ink" or "paint" [*tinta*]. While the use of soot as racial cosmetics survived throughout the *Siglo de oro*,[134] Lope de Vega's directions suggest that the exact concoction of blackface makeup could be customized for particular productions. Marcelo de Ayala y Guzmán confirms this in *El negro de cuerpo blanco, y el esclavo de su honra*, which he probably wrote in the 1660s: the play's

[133] The sheer number of adaptations of *El santo negro* by later playwrights bears witness to the popularity of this play. See for instance *El negro de mejor amo,* by Antonio Mira de Amescua (1631), the lost *El negro del serafín, San Antonio*, by Rodrigo Pacheco (1641), and *El negro del seraphin,* by Luis Vélez de Guevara (1643). Note that Mira de Amescua's play rewrote Lope's *El Santo Negro* while borrowing the title of Lope's other black saint play, *El negro de major amo* (this has been the source of much bibliographic confusion).

[134] As late as 1668, in *La Negra por el honor* by Agustin Moreto, for example, we find stage directions of this sort: "Enter Celio, dressed as Leonor, and Leonor, dressed as a man, her face covered with soot" [*Sale Celio, vestido de mujer con el de Leonor, y esta de hombre, tiznado el rostro*] (Moreto 380).

hero knows the trade of black cosmetics. Cesar, a valiant general, is certain that the king is sending him off to wage war in Sardinia to have an affair with his wife during his absence. He can only think of one solution to defend his honor: pretend to go to Sardinia, disguise himself as a black slave, and join his own household in order to protect his wife against the king's lust:

> What are you waiting for, my wits?
> After all, I know how to make the paste
> That imitates the nature
> Of the black Ethiop
> With such resemblance, that even if you know
> That it is but an artifice, you will wonder
> Whether it is not the real thing.
> Yes, I have to dye my face. (Ayala y Guzmán 12)[135]

For the audience to "wonder whether this is not the real thing" after all, the paste he uses to "imitate the nature of the black Ethiop" is unlikely to have followed the recipe used in Toledo in 1525, or to have contained simply soot or ink. Rather, it must have contained dark brown dyes.

Unlike Cesar's, Rosambuco's skin tone does not need to be realistic, because his blackness has an obvious symbolical value. Indeed, he is visually set as particularly dark in order to emphasize the bleaching effect of grace following the Catholic conception of baptism:

> Already, within my breast I can feel
> The new delights that afford me bravery,
> Courage, and inspiration.
> Ah perverse Quran!
> I intend to abandon your lies:
> Now I seek my glory,
> Now I long to be a Christian,
> Now I rejoice with this new law.
> A white soul within a black body! (Lope, *Santo negro* 308v)[136]

---

[135] "*Pues que aguarda mi cautela?/ Pues sé el modo de la pasta/ Con que á la naturaleza/ Del negro Etiope, imita/ Con similitud tan nueva,/ Que aun sabiendo que es engaño, / Se duda como evidencia./ El rostro me he de teñir."* (Ayala y Guzmán 12)

[136] "*Ya dentro del pecho siento,/ Nueuos gustos que me dan/ Valor, animo, y aliento,/ ¡A peruertido Alcoran!/ Dexar tu fabula intento/ Ya mi gloria solicito/ Ya a ser cristiano me incite/ Ya con esta ley me allegro/ Blanca el alma, el cuerpo negro.*" (Lope, *Santo negro* 307)

While at the beginning of the play the blackness of Rosambuco's skin aligned with the blackness of his Muslim soul, his conversion to Catholicism washes his soul white and thus disrupts the alignment between physical appearance and morality. Catholics can be of all skin tones, because all Catholic souls are white, the play says. Indeed, after his baptism, Rosambuco prays, and God promises him, via the stage musicians, that "although you are black, one day, you will be fair, handsome, and white" [*aunque eres negro, habrá día que estés bello, hermoso y blanco*] (Lope, *Santo negro* 310r). Commenting on the whiteness of Rosambuco's future heavenly body, God confirms that the saint's soul has just been washed white. [137]

The second half of the play confirms that this disruption of the body/soul chromatic alignment is God's *modus operandi*. We witness the hardships Rosambuco experiences at the monastery as he makes a deadly enemy of brother Pedrisco. Pedrisco is jealous of the Saint's moral authority: he resents the ease with which Rosambuco rises in the monastic hierarchy, and feels insecure when he considers Rosambuco's own discipline and severity. His hostility is framed in straightforward racist terms, and produces a wealth of racial slurs throughout the play: "sooty dog" [*perro tiznado*], "Father Blackie" [*padre Mandingo*], "dirty greyhound" [*galgo sucio*], "fighead" [*cara de higo*], "Barrabas' *negro*-in-chief" [*negrazo de Barrabas*], and so on, and so forth. Pedrisco is presented to the audience as a bad Catholic because he is unable to disconnect Rosambuco's physical aspect from his soul. Indeed, about to execute his vengeance, he announces "Today, I initiate my bloody vengeance./ Today I am St Michael,/ and you, wild

[137] It is not a coincidence that virtually every single black saint eventually dies in seventeenth century *comedias*: dying is the ultimate form of bleaching, since it enables black catholics to be reborn in a heavenly body whose color finally matches their soul. In that respect, Spanish *comedias* could not be further away from English plays like *The White Devil*, in which Zanche declares, right before dying: "I am proud / Death cannot alter my complexion / For I shall never look pale." (5.6.226-228)

negro, you are the Devil [*Entablo/ Hoy mi venganza cruel / Ahora soy San Miguel,/ Y tu fiero Negro, el diablo*] (Lope, *Santo negro* 118v). In those lines, Pedrisco attempts to mobilize the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface, but he is unmistakably identified as a villain and as a bad Christian as he does so.

In Lope's play, it is God Himself who delivers the final blow to any equation between physical blackness and moral blackness. Indeed, at the beginning of the third act, the Vice-roy visits the monastery in order to ask the black saint to help his daughter, who is possessed by the Devil. In anticipation of the vice-roy's arrival, Pedrisco devises a cunning plan:

> I am going to put soot on my face,
> And imitate the *negro* in everything.
> Thus I will become his duplicate
> . . . . . .
> If I parade as a *negro*
> In the presence of the Vice-roy
> They will think that I am the *negro* himself.
> We are the same size, after all
> . . . . . .
> But little by little,
> I will start acting so crazy
> That the Vice-roy who is pursuing him now
> Will believe that the *negro* is mad.
> This way, I will make
> The dog lose all credit
> And good opinion
> Among wise and noble people.
> What an excellent plan!
> I don't want to delay it any further:
> Time to soot up!
> Soon, I will be avenged! (Lope, *Santo negro* 316v)[138]

[138] "*Quierome el rostro tiznar/ Y en todo al negro imitarle,/ Y haziendo su semejante … / Y yendo negro y delante/ En presencia del Virrey,/ Pensarán que el negro soy;/ Pues de su estatura soy, … / Pero yo haré poco a poco,/ Locuras de suerte y traza/ Que el Virrey que sale a caza/ Tenga allí al negro por loco;/ Y con aquesta occasion/ Con la gente noble y cuerda/ Haré que el perrengue pierda/ El crédito y opinion/ ¡O que buena traza he dado!/ No lo quiero dilatar;/ Yo me voy luego a tiznar/ Presto quedaré vengado."* (Lope, *Santo negro* 316v)

However, God intervenes in order to protect the reputation of his black saint: he performs a miracle to foil Pedrisco's cunning plan:

> *Enter Pedrisco, his face covered with flour.*
> Pedrisco: Here I am, all sooty!
> And here is the Vice-roy, O joy!
> My Lord, how do you come
> Here for me, for a *negro*?
> I am but a sinner, and if
> Holy St Francisco had not
> Desired to…
> The Saint*:* Brother Pedrisco,
> Why do you come thus? Are you mad?
> Who put this flour on your face?
> How dare you make such an appearance
> When His Excellency is here?
> Pedrisco: This prank is going to cost me a lot:
> This is not soot. (Lope, *Santo negro* 118r)[139]

Through divine intervention, Pedrisco's soot turned into flour: blackface turned into whiteface. Not only is God frustrating Pedrisco's plans, He is also mocking Pedrisco by granting him what he desires and values more than anything else in the world: whiteness, or, more accurately, excessive whiteness. Indeed, flour-based whiteface turned the actor's skin paler than the skin tone that a Mediterranean audience would typically identify as white. This excess of whiteness on Pedrisco's face has nothing to do with morality: it is actually at odds with the darkness of his soul, since he is doing the Devil's work by attacking God's elected Saint. The excessive whiteness that God grants Pedrisco is to be understood in exclusively ethnic terms. This scene is the reverse of Rosambuco's conversion: when he shows up covered with flour, Pedrisco must have been perceived by the early modern audience as the symmetrical opposite of Rosambuco—

[139] "*Sale Pedrisco enharinada la cara. Pedrisco: Bien tiznado voy así/ He aquí el Virrey, ya me allegro./ Señor ¿Por mi, por un negro/ Como yo venis aquí?/ Soy un pecador que a poco/ Que el sagrado San Francisco/ Queriendo…/ El santo: Hermano Pedrisco,/ ¿Cómo viene así? ¿Està loco?/ ¿Quien le enharinó la cara?/ ¿Estando aquí Su Excelencia/ Viene con essa apariencia?/ Pedrisco: La burla me costò cara;/ Que no estoy tiznado."* (Lope, *Santo negro* 118r)

a black soul within an excessively white body.

Lope de Vega recycles the motif of blackface-turning-into-whiteface in another play, *La vitoria de la honra*, just a few years later, in ways that emphasize again the disconnection between skin tone and morality. *La vitoria de la honra* simply dramatizes the fall of Leonor, a Sevillian wife who rejects Antonio's advances for two acts before she finally yields to her secret passion for this gallant young man. To avenge his honor, the cuckold husband kills her and her lover. Instrumental in Leonor's temptation and final disgrace is her smart, beautiful, ambitious, and unscrupulous *mulata* slave, Dorotea. Because Dorotea played the part of the messenger between Leonor and her lover, she is guilty. Thus, when Baldivia, the husband, starts executing all the traitors in his household, she hides wherever she can. When Baldivia leaves, Dorotea comes out of a flour basket covered with flour [*llena de harina*] (Lope, *vitoria* 200). While in *El santo negro,* blackface turns into whiteface in the spectator's imagination (we never see Pedrisco in blackface, he only announces his intention to use blackface), Lope goes a step further in *La vitoria de la honra* by having brownface turn into whiteface under the spectators' eyes. Indeed, the actress playing the part of Dorotea had two superimposed layers of makeup in that scene. Considering the pace with which Baldivia executes his vengeance and the small number of lines between Dorotea's last intervention before she hides and first intervention when she comes out of hiding, it is very unlikely that the actress had the time to take off her black makeup and cover herself with flour in-between. The audience saw a white actress in brownface with a topcoat of whiteface.

This baroque layering of racial cosmetics does not affect Dorotea by coincidence. Indeed, throughout the play, Dorotea manifests a desire that characterizes most of seventeenth century

race-conscious stage *mulatas*: a deep desire to become whiter by a few shades.[140] Thus, by plunging her into a flour basket at the end of the play, Lope de Vega grants her what her heart desires, which is exactly what Pedrisco's heart desires: whiteness, as much whiteness as possible. And just as in *El santo negro*, this whiteness is to be understood in terms that are purely ethnic and by no means moral: when Dorotea appears in whiteface, every spectator knows that she is morally guilty of having actively helped her mistress in her extramarital affair. Like Pedrisco's, Dorotea's whiteface scene simultaneously ridicules her desire for racial whiteness—her tendency to wear a white mask in the sense defined by Frantz Fanon—and underlines her moral shadiness.

Lope de Vega's black and mulato plays use cosmetics in ways that echo the dominant Catholic perception of Afro-diasporic bodies and souls as disconnected upon baptism. Doing so, those plays "de-narrativize" blackface, to use John Beusterien's terminology.[141] It would be simplistic, however, to think that this perception, just because it did not moralize blackness any longer, was liberating. I argue that the Catholic theology that informed this perception of black skin as immaterial at the end of the sixteenth century had a flipside: an obsession with the materiality of the black body in which Spaniards could indulge guilt-free once that body was separated from its soul. Sandoval's book has such a flipside: its abundance of references to the "ugliness" and "deformities" of the people he wanted to include into the Spanish imperial body politic. For instance, he dedicates a whole chapter to "the structure of *negros*' faces, their hair,

[140] This desire for whiteness is explicitly articulated early on in the play, when the gallant Antonio sends old Saluscia—a Celestina-like character, bawd, and messenger who can provide women with whatever they need—to Leonor's house. Because Saluscia provided her with an efficient unguent to treat scabies in the past, Dorotea asks her for a new product: "Mother Saluscia, do you have any cataplasm/ That would take away my brown complexion?" [*Ay madre, algun diaquilon/ Que quite el color mulato?*] (Lope, *vitoria* 187). This "cataplasm" most probably refers to the early modern ancestors of the skin-bleaching products that are so popular today in parts of the world afflicted with colorism. Despite her coquettish denials, Dorotea dreams of a cure for blackness: she wishes she could treat her racial background away the way she treated her scabies away.

[141] See footnote #127.

the ugliness of their limbs, and their color when they resurrect" *[la composicion de la cabeza de los Etiopes, de sus cabellos, de la fealdad que se ve en sus miembros, y del color con que han de resucitar*] (Sandoval, *De Instauranda* 22).

This obsession with the materiality of the black body emerges in *El santo negro*. Right before Pedrisco's whiteface act, Rosambuco successfully exorcises the Vice-roy's daughter in a scene that definitively distinguishes the black Rosambuco from the Devil. Indeed, Rosambuco invokes God's power in order to free the young girl from diabolical forces, and the Devil answers through her mouth:

> You can't,
> You stupid sooty *negro*—
> You are so ugly that I want to run away
> . . . . . .
> Neither you, nor heavens, nor God
> Suffice against me. Can't they see
> Your pig snout,
> Your jet, your smut,
> And the black frying pan that you are?
> "Me Neglo flom Angola, me want to take you out
> Of da little Miss" Ha! Why don't you take this!
> *(She gives him the finger).* (Lope, *Santo negro* 217v)[142]

The ideological ambivalence of this paragraph is vertiginous. The passage proves that Spaniards like Pedrisco who equate black people with the Devil are wrong; it proves that Rosambuco has been chosen by God to be his champion; but it also reinforces severe esthetic prejudices against black bodies in a cruel comedic way. The audience probably laughed at the devil's race jokes. This scene works to efface the difference of the black body, and yet it compulsively emphasizes it. The play seems obsessed with the materiality of black bodies, comparing it to animal parts,

[142] "*No podras/ Negro tiznado, modorro/ Que de verte aqui me corro … / Ni tú, ni el cielo, ni Dios,/ No soys bastantes ¿No ven/ El hocico de lechon,/ El azabache, el tizón,/ El aforro de sarten?/ Nenglo Angola, de donceya/ Querar sacar ¡Toma higa!"* (Lope, *Santo negro* 217v)

cooking utsensils, and precious gemstones. The belief that black skin is immaterial and the obsession with the materiality of black bodies are two sides of the same coin. In this scene, Lope de Vega is flipping the coin.

A partition between body and soul that makes the soul the only important thing in God's eyes leaves the earthly body prey to men's rule and desires. In an age of slavery, leaving earthly bodies to men's rules and desires was not a neutral move. It left Afro-diasporic material bodies available as commodities fit for desire, purchase, trade, and consumption. Even at it most optimistic about black souls, Spanish theatre fully participated in the widespread reification of black bodies.[143] In Lope de Vega's corpus and even after him (for we will consider his legacy later on in this chapter), this participation takes the form of what I call the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface—-a combination of visual and verbal cues that leads spectators to read blackface as indicative of the commodity status of the character it helps create. The recurrent comparison between Rosambuco's skin color and jet [*azabache*] points to this new hermeneutics.[144] The commodifying hermeneutics of blackface functions as a window that lets us catch a glimpse of the white affects surrounding the issue of Afro-Spaniards' integration into Spanish society from 1600 to 1620.

[143] Asking how exactly this commodifying hermeneutics of blackface participates in the real life reification of black bodies through slavery is to ask an impossible question, for it is impossible to know playwrights' exact intentions as they created black characters, and impossible also to assess the exact impact of a black play onto a spectator's subsequent behavior towards black people. What theatre scholars never doubt, however, is that theatrical representations simultaneously reflect and impact social reality. I stride the gap between knowing that a connection between the stage and social practices exists and knowing that it is impossible to exactly define that connection by using the term "cultural participation," and by reading blackface as a window into a mainstream white psyche.

[144] Jet would remain a major trope of the poetics of commodification throughout the seventeenth century. For instance, in Luis Vélez de Guevara's *Virtudes vencen señales* (written circa 1620), the king of Albania describes a painting of "the queen of Ethiopia, Sheba, where the white Belgian Timantes had given a divine spirit to jet" [*la reina de Etiopia / Saba, donde el azabache / negro dio espiritu dioso / el blanco Belga Timantes*] (Vélez de Guevara, *Virtudes* 86).

3) The Commodifying Hermeneutics of Blackface

Following the erroneous nineteenth century Spanish habit of considering that Spaniards of African descent only existed in the New World, historians have traditionally focused their inquiries about seventeenth century black slavery on the Americas, rather than on the Iberian Peninsula.[145] Yet evidence suggests that, by the time Lope de Vega was writing his most successful comedies, the black presence in Spain, fueled by slavery, was increasing and would not drop before the middle of the eighteenth century (Herzog 4). Seville in particular sold an estimated 1,400 slaves per year at the beginning of the seventeenth century, as opposed to 1,000 per year at the end of the sixteenth century (Herzog 3). In that respect, the metropole had the same patterns of slave importation as the colonies: New Spain imported in the first four decades of the seventeenth century more slaves than throughout the whole sixteenth century (Bennett 23). Those elements point towards a general intensification of the slave trade in the empire at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The number of Afro-Spaniards was growing—booming even, in Andalusian cities such as Granada, Cádiz, Malaga, and, most importantly, Seville (Herzog 2). Since their belonging to the Catholic community was less and less questioned, questions about black integration shifted (as they later would in England and in France) from possibility to modalities. What was the place of black Catholics in Spanish society?

The question had an obvious answer—slaves—and this answer crystallized into the trope of the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface, which Lope de Vega created and popularized. To use Raymond Williams' terminology once again, over a couple of decades, the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface became the "dominant" configuration of blackness on

[145] "Debating whether 'Spaniards of African descent' should be citizens, delegates to the first Spanish constituent assembly meeting in Cádiz in 1810 assumed that individuals of African descent existed only in the New World" (Herzog 1).

the Spanish stage. The commodifying hermeneutics of blackface is a performance device that relies on specific cues associating the blackness of the racial cosmetics worn by the performer to various commodities that are black in color. Because those commodities—often precious, such as the jet to which the Devil compares Rosambuco's skin—are objects of trade, the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface symbolically reifies black skin, and turns it into a desirable object of consumption whose primary destination is the market. This new hermeneutic paradigm of blackface replicates on stage the process of commodification that affected real early modern Afro-Spaniards off stage—very simply put—the process through which an item that is not commercial in nature, a human body, becomes commercial: slavery. By rehearsing the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface *ad nauseam*, plays replicated and naturalized the social order based on black slavery, getting spectators used to thinking of Afro-Spaniards as commodities automatically. In that sense, the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface was a powerful and extremely direct—almost in-yer-face—mechanism of black racialization.

Lope de Vega established the participation of the genre in the commodification of black bodies. In particular, *Servir a señor discreto* (1618) rehearses most of the tropes of black commodification to be found in the Spanish seventeenth century dramatic canon. *Servir a señor discreto* is one of Lope's thirty-something Sevillian plays, most of which he wrote after his stay in Seville—a city he was extremely fond of—between 1600 and 1604 (Serrera Contreras 151). Seville was the ideal setting for a play concerned with the monetary transactions of marriage and slavery.[146] While half of the play is set in Madrid and Córdoba (on the way from Seville to

[146] *Servir a señor discreto* follows the successful endeavors of Don Pedro Carrero, a poor gentleman from Madrid, to marry Leonor, the daughter of a rich *indiano* from Seville. While Don Pedro truly loves Leonor, the opening conversation that he has with his servant Giron leaves no doubt: he needs to marry Leonor's money just as much as he wants to marry her. The money that he spends on courting her is money safely invested. Don Pedro pretends to be extremely wealthy in order to seduce the young woman, who, appalled by her father's project to marry her to an old

Madrid), the spirit of Seville, whose exalted description as the eighth wonder of the world opens the first act, permeates the whole play. As it turns out, the spirit of the city is fairly mercantile. Indeed, since the beginning of the sixteenth century, Seville, which, upon Queen Isabella's order had been hosting the *Casa de Contratación*, had been the capital of Spanish imperial commerce. It is no coincidence that the most famous stage *indianos* of the period should appear in *comedias* set in Sevilla; in several plays, Lope celebrates Seville as the "port and door of the Indies" [*puerto y puerta de Indias*]. Neither is it a coincidence that most of Lope's stage *negros* and *mulatos* should appear in the same plays: as previously mentioned, Seville was the first port through which black slaves were imported into the Spanish metropole. It had the highest concentration of black people, both free and unfree, in the whole country. Seville was the port through which all sorts of exotic goods collected from around the world entered the country.[147] From China to Peru, Seville was the ultimate emporium for imperial commodities. Several contemporaries compared Seville to a chessboard, counting as many black and white pieces (Herzog 3). *Negros* and *mulatos* were visible and numerous enough to have their own separate confraternities, which participated in Corpus Christi processions under their own

---

powerful sea captain, Don Silvestre, marries Don Pedro in secret. When Pedro's money runs out after six months, in order to hide his disgrace from his beloved wife, he seeks employment at the court in Madrid, and, luckily, becomes secretary and close friend to a member of the royal family, the Count of Las Palmas. When Leonor father's, Don Fernando, discovers his daughter's secret marriage, he becomes quite taken with the idea that his son-in-law is, as Pedro's pretense goes, a member of the prestigious order of Santiago. The whole family tracks Pedro down in Madrid, and poor Pedro is ready for his whole world to crumble, when the Count saves the day. The Count gives riches to his secretary, uses favors from the king to make Pedro a true member of the order of Santiago, and foils old Silvestre's plans to impede Pedro's marriage with Leonor. They live happily and wealthily ever after.

[147] For instance, when Captain Don Silvestre tries to seduce Leonor in Act 2, he mentions the articles that he brought back from his last trip: "I have here for my wife / A thousand objects brought from China to/ The markets of Lima: damasks and satins/ Of various shades with a thousand different/ Patterns, quilts covered with/ Strange birds, flowers and animals,/ Cups plated with red lead varnish, / And, if she likes plates, some porcelains / That will make silver jealous." [*A mi esposa traigo / Mil cosas de la China que a venderse / Llegan a Lima, como son damascos,/ Y rasos de matizes differentes / Con mil varias figuras, colchas llenas./ De animales estraños, flores, pajaros, / Y en barniz de Azarcon doradas Xicaras / Y algunas porcelenas, de quien tiene / La plata embidia, si por plato viene.*] (Lope, *servir* 111)

banners (Sentaurens 794). Lope systematically includes *mualata* maids, "*esclavillas"*, or slave *negros*—but usually *mulata* maids—in most of his Sevillian plays, even when the dramatic arch of the play does not require it. *Mulata* maids bring the Sevillian *couleur locale* to the stage.

The subplot of the play revolves around the relationship between Giron, Pedro's servant, and Elvira, Leonor's *mulata* maid and possibly half-sister (since both young women have an *Indiano* merchant father, and Leonor calls her maid "sister" at one point). A stage direction that describes Elvira's appearance tells us all we need to know about her: "Elvira, *mulata*, with a white apron, her keys hanging on her side, and a little topknot of black curly hair fitted on her head" [*Elvira mulata, con delantal blanco, sus llaves al lado, y un tocadillo encajado en la cabeza de pelo negro rizo*] (Lope, *servir* 99). She is a servant (apron), she is a *mulata,* and she is the key-holder—potential bawd and problem-solver. After all, she is the one who convinces Leonor that Pedro will be a better husband than Don Silvestre, and she serves as messenger between the two lovers. Her resourcefulness is apparent from the start, when Giron describes her as "a *mulata*, who, I heard, is smart as a whip" [*mulata de quien estoy informado,/ que corta en el aire un pelo*]. In addition to being smart, Elvira is described as beautiful by the white men who are drawn to her, such as Don Silvestre's sailors (whom Elvira scares away with a knife when they start taking liberties), and Giron himself, who promises to marry her. As the rest of the play makes abundantly clear, Giron has no intention whatsoever of marrying Elvira once he gets what he wants from her. What the play also makes clear is that Elvira is hard set on making him her husband. Ultimately, Elvira wins, as the Count, true *deus ex machina,* forces Giron to marry her in the last ten lines of the play in order to reward her services. Elvira is an exception: more often than not, in Lope's plays, hyper-sexualized *mulatas* are not so "lucky."[148]

[148] See Martin's final refusal to marry Leonor in *Los peligros de la ausencia*, for instance.

Giron's own racial ambiguity makes makes him particularly fearful of turning black socially by marrying a woman of color.[149] It also makes him particularly fluent in the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface, which he deploys most heavily around Elvira precisely in order to keep her at bay. For instance, he deploys it when he sets off for Madrid with his impoverished master and tries to get a parting present from Elvira:

> Elvira: Did you just say money?
> Giron: Yes, money.
> Elvira: How can you be short on cash
> When you serve such a great master?
> Giron: He's not, but I am.
> Elvira: With him, you cannot lack anything.
> Now, you can treat yourself
> With memories of me.
> Giron: That's it?
> Elvira: I want you to take my soul with you.
> Giron: I had rather take your body with me:
> That way I could sell it
> And make money out of it. (Lope, *servir* 107)[150]

Partioning Elvira's soul and body immediately leads to the commodification of her body, through prostitution, slavery, or both. A tiff ensues, and Elvira eventually gives Giron the money

---

[149] Indeed, Giron's fear of turning black, both in terms of real blackness (miscegenation) and stage blackness (staining), is paradoxical, given the fact that his own racial background is unclear. Elvira repeatedly states that she does not consider him to be white. When she reveals Don Pedro's identity to Leonor's father, for instance, she describes Giron thus: "His servant is a man of my own complexion, and very well-spoken" *[El criado es un hombre / Asi de mi color y bien hablado*] (Lope, *servir* 104). Later on, when she wants Giron to taker her in his arms and he protests that she will stain him, she ironically asks: "Oh, is your highness so white?" [*Tan blanco es vuessa merced?*] (Lope, *servir* 116). No other character in the play treats Giron as non-white or ever alludes to his physical appearance, so Elvira's statements might just be a strategy to bridge the divide between her lover and herself. However, we also have to consider the possibility that Elvira, who, according to Giron himself, is "smart as a whip," might be right. Giron might be *passing* as white, and his obsession with turning black might originate, precisely, from his lack of whiteness to start with.

[150] "Elvira: *Dinero, dices?/ Giron: Dinero. / Elvira: Pues con tan gran Caballero/ Te ha faltado el dinerillo?/ Giron: A el no, mas a mi si./ Elvira: Con el que puede faltarte?/ Bien puedes tu regalarte/ Con mi memoria./ Giron: Es ansi?/ Elvira: Que lleves mi alma quiero./ Giron: Mejor tu cuerpo quisiera./ Que en efeto le vendiera/ Y me valiera dinero."* (Lope, *servir* 107)

he asks for, but not before Giron has made it clear that he never stops viewing Elvira's body as a precious commodity. When they are finally re-united in Madrid, Giron further confirms this:

Giron*:* My little *negra*!

Elvira*:* Unfortunately so.

Giron, let us stop fighting: put my arms

Around your neck, and, for the love of God,

Let us look like a writing tool and its inkstand.

Giron*:* That's nice jet I am putting around my neck. (Lope, *servir* 116)[151]

Beyond the sex joke, by referring to herself as an "inkstand" in which Giron can dip his "writing tool," Elvira is trying to suggest that they belong together. Not surprisingly, that is not the metaphor that Giron fixes on. Giron ignores her point and runs another metaphor instead: by "putting her arms around his neck," he is putting on a necklace, and a black necklace was often made of "*azabache*" [jet]. Thus, Elvira is a precious jet necklace that he can own. While Elvira treats Giron as if they belong together, Giron treats Elvira like a belonging. And here again, in this battle of metaphors, Giron responds to Elvira's love by deploying the poetic of commodification.

Giron might be the commodifier in chief, but the mercantile spirit of Seville permeates the play, and Elvira is systematically read as a precious commodity. When she promises to remain silent in Act 2, for instance, she declares "I will be quiet as if I were made of bronze" [*Yo callaré como si de bronze fuera*] (Lope, *servir* 104). Elvira is a beautiful bronze statue, of her own accord. When Don Pedro rehearses with Giron all the compliments he intends to pay to

[151] "Giron: *¡Negrita!/ Elvira: Por mi desastre./ Deja esas necias porfias./ Cuélgame al cuello, y por Dios/ Que parezcamos los dos/ Tintero y escribanias./ Giron: Lindo azabache me cuelgo."* (Lope, *servir* 116)

Elvira in Act 1 in order to ingratiate himself with Leonor's trusted maid, he uses a plethora of commodifying metaphors. Listing positive incarnations of blackness (subtle shadows in painting, the refreshing quality of the night, etc.), he compares Elvira to quicksilver: "Like quicksilver purifies gold in the crucible" [*Como al oro en el crisol / Giron, purifica el grano de Soliman*] (Lope, *servir* 103). The comparison pays homage to Elvira's quick wits and to her transformative power over Leonor (whose name bursts with gold), but also inscribes her in a goldsmith's inventory. When Elvira arrives, the flatterer performs fantastically: "Bless the gentleman who made love to your mother, for he set ebony into ivory so well!" [*Bien haya amén / El caballero que amó / Tu madre, pues engastó / Ebano en marfil tan bien*] (Lope, *servir* 103). In Don Pedro's words, Elvira becomes a precious sculpture of ivory encrusted with ebony.

Finally, when he describes her teeth as pearls [*boca de perlas*], Don Pedro is giving Elvira a softer version of a commodifying metaphor that he rehearsed just a few minutes earlier, in connivance with Giron and with the spectators:

> Pedro: Plautus forgives
> Lovers' flatteries best.
> He says that they flatter
> Even their ladies' dogs.
> Well if dogs can serve…
> Look how well I will flatter
> The *mulata.*
> Giron: You must really be in love,
> If you already call her *mulata* a bitch.
> Pedro: A bitch, yes, and a pearl at the same time. (Lope, *servir* 103)[152]

Pedro is drawing on the long-standing European tradition of racial slurs (perceptible in the insults used by brother Pedrisco in *El santo negro*) that compared black Afro-diasporic people to

[152] "*Pedro: Plauto disculpa major/ La lisonja de quien ama./ Que dize que hasta los perros/ De sus damas lisonjean. / Pues como los perros sean/ la disculpa de sus yerros,/ Mira si alabo bien/ la mulata./ Giron: Harto bien amas,/ Pues que ya perra la llamas./ Pedro: Perra, y aun perla tambien."* (Lope, *servir* 103)

dogs. By punning on the quasi-homophones "*perra*" [bitch] and "*perla*" [pearl], Don Pedro reveals the proximity between a straightforward racist discourse that demeans black bodies ("bitch") and poetics of commodification ("pearl"). Those two discourses are but one letter away from each other, and, as we will see in Chapter 3, that letter is an unstable boundary, since it was particularly likely to shift in the mouth of a *negro* character (*comedia negros* usually mispronounced [R] as [L]). The "*perra*"/"*perla*" pun lays bare the symbolic violence at the heart of poetic commodification. This pun functions as a miniature version of the play's racial rhetoric, and helps us see beyond the apparently positive value of comparisons between stage blackness and precious materials, to grasp the cultural participation of the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface in a slavery-based economy.

The *perra/perla* pun is recurrent in Lope de Vega's corpus, and always associated with *mulata* maid characters specifically. Lope recycles this meaningful "*perra/perla*" pun in *El premio de bien hablar y volver por las mujeres* (1635), where the white servant Martin uses it against the *mulata* Rufina (Lope, *premio* 11). In *La vitoria de la honra*, Don Antonio, the gallant, also calls his mistress's *mulata* maid, Dorotea, "*una perla*" (Lope, *vitoria* 180v).[153] This recurrence is not fortuitous: the image of a pearl has a particularly strong symbolic value in relation to early modern people of color.

First, the association of Afro-diasporic people with pearls alludes to a long-standing iconographic tradition in which people of color, almost regardless of their social status, be they Magi, Moorish officers, or servants in an aristocratic household, were often represented with a

[153] On a related note, in *Teágenes and Cariclea* (1635), Montalbán compares Ethiopian soldiers to another kind of pearls, glassbeads: "One hundred and twenty *negros* who look like a brook of carbon, a sea of ink, and a countless number of glassbeads fallen from the clouds" [*Ciento y veinte mil negros,/ Que parecen vn arroyo/ De carbon, vn mar de tinta,/ Y vn pielago de abalorio,/ Despeñado de las nubes*] (Montalbán 134).

pearl earring. This was very often the case in black male portraiture, but not exclusively: for instance, the Dutch Albert Eckhout, in his series of Brazilian portraits painted in the 1640s, recuperated this iconographic tradition within a colonial framework, and painted an "African woman" with pearls (Fig.8). The woman presents the fruits of colonial Brazil to the spectators, while her child (slightly lighter than her) bears witness to her own fruitfulness; she is half naked, and yet she wears two rows of red corral beads, two white pearl earrings, and two rows of pearls, whose whiteness is enhanced by the contrast with the bared skin of her chest. Indeed, pearls, which had long been perceived as the product of wealthy oriental nations, were now perceived across early seventeenth century Europe as a product of the Indies. Thus, the Afro-Brazilian woman on Eckhout's portrait, presumably a slave, is a commodity and wears the commodity that symbolizes the fantastic wealth of the Indies: pearls. By virtue of a visual synecdoche effect, pearls reinforce the commodity status of the woman of color who wears them.

Second, in the empire, real life women of color who could afford them seem to have been very fond of pearls. In 1625, Thomas Gage visited the city of Mexico, was in awe of its wealth and splendor, and remarked on what he read as the sumptuary excesses of the locals:

> A Blackamoor or a tawny young maid and slave will make hard shift, but she will be in fashion with her neck-chain and bracelets of pearls and her earbobs of considerable jewels. The attire of this baser sort of Blackamoors and Mulattoes . . . is so light and their carriage so enticing that many Spaniards, even of the better sort (who are too too prone to venery) disdain their wives for them." (qtd. in Bennett 32)

Gage's reaction, ethnocentric as it may be, is interesting because Elvira, who, as Giron mentions at the beginning of the play, is not originally from Seville but comes from the Indies, is kith and kin with the hyper-sexualized colonial "tawny young maids and slaves" who shocked Gage.

Gage was not alone in disapproving of the fondness that non-white mistresses of affluent *indianos* had for pearls. In Lima in 1554, and later in Mexico in 1612, sumptuary laws were passed to prohibit *negras* and *mulatas*, free or unfree, from wearing gold, silver, and pearls (Lucena Salmoral 237). In seventeenth century Spanish colonies, pearls were a marker of status for women of color, and the repressive race-based sumptuary laws attached to pearls turned them into symbols of those women's social struggles. Thus, pearls were an ambivalent image, both commodifying and empowering for early modern colonial women of color.

Third, pearls were a well-known biblical image: "again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" (*King James Bible*, Matthew, 13.45). Alonso de Sandoval, in particular, used this parable to epitomize the mission of the Jesuit "*operarios de negros*" in Cartagena de las Indias. Sandoval's passion for pearls as luxurious commodities and objects of beauty is immediately perceptible to his reader.[154] Yet he draws on Matthew's gospel to give pearls a spiritual dimension when he mentions "the good merchant who is content with the infinite value of the precious and divine pearl that is Jesus Christ, who would not give it for the world" (Sandoval, *De Instauranda* 146),[155] or when he compares the Devil to "an infernal thief" who will "steal the pearl of vocation" from young monks who won't confess their temptations to their superiors [*el dá grande occasion al ladron infernal para que le robe la perla preciosa de la vocacion]* (Sandoval, *De Instauranda* 499).

[154] Sandoval devotes two complete chapters to describing pearls, the seas where they can be found, the techniques used to cultivate them and to extract them, the prices for which they are sold, and more (Sandoval, *De Instauranda* 391-403). Those chapters provide a taxonomy of pearls based on shape and color, as well as various techniques for whitening imperfectly white pearls, thereby increasing their value (Sandoval, *De Instauranda* 396).

[155] "*Buen mercader, lo que el alcanzaba del valor infinito de la preciosa y divina perla Christo Jesus, por quien nada daria quien diesse el mundo todo*." (Sandoval, *De Instauranda* 146)

In the last few pages of the 1627 Seville edition, Sandoval uses the image of the pearl to turn black slaves themselves into objects that are simultaneously commercial and spiritual, commodities with a Catholic soul:

> The sovereign Merchant of the Gospel, whose urgent desire is to bring, in the East and the West, pearls of great value (who are souls redeemed with His blood) out of the coarse and ugly shells of black and Indian bodies, has put in the Indies religious men [Jesuits], who plunge like divers into the deep and into a sea of a thousand difficulties to collect them." (Sandoval, *Naturaleza* 78)[156]

The image of the pearl is the means through which Sandoval can fuse colonial economic interests and missionary zeal at the expense of colored bodies—the interests of men and the interests of God, in a way. This image encapsulates a certain conception of Spanish colonial history. Lope produced most of the plays that use the *perra/perla* pun (between 1603 and 1617) before Sandoval published his work, so he could not possibly have alluded to Sandoval's work on the pearl symbolism. Here again, the imagery suggests that Sandoval and Lope de Vega were working with the same late sixteenth century ideological legacy some twenty years apart. The popularity of Sandoval's work in the Peninsula, visible in its publication and circulation history, suggests that the conception of Afro-diasporic people as commodities-with-a-soul, this non-exclusionary—mutually beneficial even—relation between commerce and religion kept gaining traction in the metropole as Lope de Vega and his followers deployed the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface around many Elviras.

---

[156] "*Aquel sobrano mercader del Evangelio, cuya ansia y desseo es sacar en el Oriente y Occidente perlas de sumo valor (que son almas redimidas con su sangre) de las conchas broncas y feas de cuerpos negros y indias, ha puesto religiosos que como buzos se zabullen en la profundidad y mar de mil dificultades a sacarselas."* (Sandoval, *Naturaleza* 78)

To synthesize, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the image of the pearl in relation to women of color had an extremely dense and paradoxical symbolical value: it highlighted the commodity status of the woman of color who wore it while functioning as a reminder of what she could never be nor have, by drawing on enmeshed religious, legal, and esthetic discourses. Lope de Vega's *perra/perla* pun derives its punch from this dense paradoxical symbolism, and points the elaborateness of the poetic commodification upon which the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface relies.

4) The *mulato* Issue: White Affects and Fractured Semiotics

In this section, I further explore the dynamics of the hermeneutics of blackface during the period 1600-1620 in relation to *mulato* characters specifically; I show how the hybridity of this new and uniquely Iberian stock character created by Lope de Vega posed a serious representational challenge to the stage and fractured the semiotics of blackface in performance. I argue that the absence of a new hermeneutics of blackface tailored specifically to brown *mulato* characters and the resorting to a self-contradictory bricolage of pre-existing racialized languages occasioned a hermeneutic crisis informed by white Spaniards' contemporary struggles with the question of *mulato*s' place in Spanish society. This crisis resonates with the anxieties caused by the potential illegibility of hybrid *mulatos* in a culture obsessed with racial legibility.

Elvira's association with the Indies—which is far from rare for Lope de Vega's *mulata* characters—is indicative of a larger cultural perception of racial mixing as a product of the empire, a perception to which Garcilaso de la Vega strongly contributed in the the *Comentarios reales*, published in Lisbon in 1609. The Peruvian Garcilaso devotes a whole chapter to the "new names to call various generations" [*nombres nuevos para nombrar diversas generaciones*]:

> We forgot to say that the best thing that came to the Indies is Spaniards and the *negros* who they later brought here as slaves, for there was none in this country which is mine before the Spaniards came. Here, those two nations have given birth to others, mixed in all kinds of manners, and we use various names to differentiate them in order to be understood. (Garcilaso 255) [157]

In "that country which is his," Garcilaso de la Vega writes, Spaniards are called "*españoles*" or "*castellanos*," black slaves brought from Africa are called "*negros*" or "*guineo*s," Spaniards' children born in the Indies are called "*criollos*," just like the children of *negros* slaves born in the Indies. Children born from a *"negro*" and an "*indio*" are called "*mulatos*," and *mulatos*' children are called "*cholos*," an injurious term, according to Garcilaso, who does not explain why *mulatos*' children are perceived so negatively. Meanwhile, the children born from "*castellanos*" and "*indios*," such as Garcilaso himself, are called "*mestizos*"; the children born from "*castellanos*" and "*mestizos"* are called "*quatralvo*s," and the children born from "*mestizos*" and "*indios*" are called "*tresalvos*." Garcilaso's interests clearly lean—for obvious reasons—more towards Indian/Spanish *mestizaje* than African/Spanish *mestizaje* (his omission of the African/Spanish mixing possibility and peculiar definition of "*mulatos*" is even suspicious), but this short chapter has the merit of suggesting that, about a century before the painterly trend of the *pinturas de castas* boomed in New Spain, the racial classification of "nations" "mixed in all kinds of manners" was already on the rise in the empire, as a result of colonial expansion.

In his 1495 Latin-Spanish dictionary, Antonio de Nebrija had included the term "*negro*

---

[157] "*Lo mejor de lo que ha pasado a las Indias, se nos olvidava que son los Españoles y los negros que despues que aca han llevado por esclavos para servirse dellos, que tampoco les habia antes en aquella mi tierra. Destas dos naciones se han hecho alla otras, mezcladas de todas maneras, y par alas differenciar les llaman por diversos nombres para entenderse por ellos."* (Garcilaso 255)

de Guinea," but not "*mulato*" or "*mestizo*." By contrast, in 1611, two years after Garcilaso published the text quoted above, Sebastián de Covarrubias includes the terms "*mulato*" and "*mestizo*" in his *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española*. And sixteen years later, Alonso de Sandoval, in *De instauranda*, reinforces the idea that racial mixing comes from the empire, scrutinizing the shades of black skin produced there:

> Among white men, there are many kinds of whiteness, and, similarly, among black men, there are many kinds of blackness. Indeed, between white and vermillion, you will find shades such as pale and golden; and, similarly, between white and black, you will find shades such as ashen, swarthy, red, and tawny, like Indians in this New World who generally look tawny, or like cooked quince, or jaundiced, or chestnut brown—and that also applies to *negros*. (Sandoval, *De Instauranda* 10)[158]

Sandoval adds shades of black skin to the list, such as "mulatto-like or completely mulatto, dun, black mixed with Indian, yellowish-brown, between mulatto and black, chestnut brown, or toasted—for this nation has all of those colors, and many more" (Sandoval, *De Instauranda* 12).[159] Those lexical changes from Nebrija to Sandoval over one hundred and thirty years reflect both the transformation of the racial makeup of the imperial population and the evolution of the Spanish racial epistemology towards classification.

In the Peninsula, this move towards a classification of imperial subjects was embedded in the ongoing process of national self-fashioning that mobilized all cultural spheres: a process in

[158] "*Ay hombres blancos de muchas maneras de blancura, y negros de muchas maneras de negregura: y de blanco va a Bermejo por descolorido y rubio, y a negro por ceniciento, moreno, rojo, y leonado, como los Indios deste Nuevo mundo, los quales son todos en general como leonados, o membrillos cochos, atericiados, o castaños, lo qual tambien se verifica en los negros."* (Sandoval, *De Instauranda* 10)

[159] "*Amulatados, o del todo mulatos, pardos, zambos, de color bazo, loro, castaño, o tostado, porque toda esta variedad y mucho mas colores tiene esta nacion entresi."* (Sandoval, *De Instauranda* 12)

which, as Barbara Fuchs has shown, the self-fashioning of Spain as a ficticious Christian nation without African roots depended on policies of discrimination, exclusion, and expulsion based on a complex apparatus of statuses regarding *la limpieza de sangre*. Most importantly, "the possibility of making these distinctions depended on subjects being transparent and classifiable" (Fuchs, *Passing* 2). A general obsession with racial visibility, legibility, and indexability ensued. It is in this cultural context that the inventive lexical classification of imperial subjects—both outside and inside of the Peninsula—developed, and I argue that the appearance of *mulato* characters on stage is part of this general movement in popular culture.

Mulato characters are portrayed on the early seventeenth century stage in ways that unmistakably differentiate them from *negro* characters. The development of mixed race stock characters required the refinement and diversification of blackface cosmetics, for those characters are usually dubbed *mulatas*—not *negras*—in the *Dramatis personae*, and the stage directions never indicate that actresses should put soot on their faces [*la cara tiznada*], as they often do for *negro* characters. As a matter of fact, plays are silent on the makeup used by performers to produce brownface, but this silence does not annul the evidence pointing towards the singularity of *mulata* characterization in performance. For instance, in *Servir a señor discreto* (1618), when Lope de Vega introduces Elvira, as we saw previously, the stage direction emphasizes her hair: "a little topknot of black curly hair fitted on her head" [*un tocadillo encajado en la cabeza de pelo negro rizo*] (Lope, *servir* 99). This elaborate wig seems to have been instrumental in making the *mulata* character racially legible for the audience. Indeed, the relative looseness of Elvira's curls (necessary for curls to be perceptible by spectators from a distance) and the length of her hair (necessary to tie up a topknot) distinguish her from the *negros* characters of the 1525 Toledo performance who sport traditional African braids. Aurally,

mulata characters were distinct from *negros* characters, because they never speak in *habla de negros*, the comedic dialect reserved to black *bozal* slaves on stage that I discuss in Chapter 3. Rather, they always speak perfect Castilian. Lope de Vega's *mulatas* are enslaved maids, and yet, they "speak white," disrupting the usual alignment between accent and class. Thus, beyond the distinctiveness of their concerns and narrative archs—which are informed by their specific social positioning—*mulato* characters were constructed, visually and aurally in ways that distinguished them from *negro* characters, and this distinction reflects the growing contemporary Spanish sensibility to racial nuances and classifications.

Given this sensibility and its most likely manifestation in the use of brownface on stage, the frequency with which brown-looking characters are called "coal black" or "sooty" in *comedias* is intriguing. For instance, in Lope de Vega's *Los peligros de la ausencia* (written circa 1617), Martin, a white servant, woos the *mulata* Leonor by calling her his "sooty angel" [*angel tiznado*] (Lope, *peligros* 193r). It is commonplace in English early modern race studies to read such cues as indirect stage directions; but here, the play's insistence on Leonor's brownness prevents us from taking this phrase at face value. Indeed, Martin himself shows his awareness of Leonor's mixed heritage and brown hue when he describes her as "a heavenly *mulata*, in whose color Ethiopia mixed her dark sunset with Spain's fair dawn" [*morena de los cielos / En cuyo color mezclaron / Su ocaso escuro Etiopia, / Y España su oriente claro*] (Lope, *peligros* 192v). Similarly, in *Servir a señor discreto*, when the gallant Don Pedro offers to kiss the hand of the *mulata* maid Elvira in order to ingratiate himself with her mistress, she protests: "What? No, your mouth will get stained if you touch this charcoal" [*Ay no, imagina que se tiznará la boca, si en estos carbones toca*] (Lope, *servir* 103v). The actresses playing Elvira and Leonor did not use soot or charcoal as stage cosmetics, so there is a recurrent disconnection between the visual

performance of blackness (brownface), and a pervasive rhetoric of blackness centered on the imagery of black soot/coal.

More precisely, the divide is between a visual language that characterizes *mulatas* as brown and a verbal (and aural) language that is irreducibly based on a black and white divide. This divide fractures the semiotics of brownface in performance, as a few examples will make evident. Before she yields to Giron, Elvira expresses her desire for exclusivity with the following image: "Giron: What are you waiting for?/ Elvira: I am waiting for this coal/ To cover your face*"* [Giron: *Que aguardas?/ Elvira: Aguardo a que este carbon/ Le pongan en toda la cara]* (Lope, *servir* 104v). In Act 3, verbal characterization does not simply mobilize the image of coal, but also of ashes:

> Elvira*:* What about us? Shouldn't we
> See the notary too?
> Giron*:* What for?
> As you can see, we are marrying
> In the dark and in a thick fog.
> Your wedding will look like
> Ash-Wednesday:
> All covered with black! (Lope, *servir* 119v)[160]

Finally, when the Count asks him what he thinks of marrying Elvira, Giron, sad and resigned, responds: "I am entering a sea of ink in her arms" [*Que me entrego a un mar de tinta en sus brazos*] (Lope*, servir* 120v). Even when Giron imagines having mixed race children with Elvira, the interracial image that he uses is inadequate, as it remains predicated on a black/white divide: "That's it. The Astrologer told me the truth when he said that if I ever have children, they will be chess children: both black and white" [*Esto es hecho / El astrologo me dijo / Verdad pura, que si*

[160] "*Elvira*: *Y tú y yo, no concertamos/ Hazer nuestras escrituras?/ Giron: Que quieres tu que escrivamos?/ Quando como ves a escuras/ Y en tinieblas nos casamos/ Un miercoles de ceniza/ Se me figura tu boda/ Pues de negro se entapiza."* (Lope, *servir* 119v)

tengo / Hijos Axedrez seran, / Pues seran blancos y negros] (Lope, *servir* 120v). Whether Giron uses images that belong to a vestigial religious layer of verbal characterization, such as coal or ashes, or to lay images such as ink or chess, he does not produce a new poetics of brownness.[161]

The fault is not simply Giron's, for all the precious images used in the play to deploy the commodifying hermeneutics of brownface/blackface around Elvira are predicated on a black/white divide—whether it be jet, bronze, pearls, or ebony incrusted with ivory. On stage, *mulatas* may look brown, but they sound white, and are talked about as black. In other words, in the case of *mulatas*, the racialized domains of visual, verbal, and aural characterization disjoint in performance, contradict one another, and thus fracture the semiotics of blackface.

This fracture in the semiotics of blackface attached to *mulato*s in the first two decades of the seventeenth century occasions a hermeneutic crisis suggestive, for spectators, of a certain degree of epistemological unstability. To understand this crisis and this unstability, we must take into account the social context in which the semiotics of brownface fractured: a context in which many Spaniards imagined *mulatos* as destabilizing the social and the racial orders.[162]

---

[161] While ashes are strongly associated with the religious celebration of Ash Wednesday, soot was still invested with religious connotations by someone like Alonso de Sandoval. For Sandoval, Cham's sin altered the meaning of Canaan's skin tone: "this black color, which until then provided variety and beauty, turned into soot, into a stain, and into a mark of infamy (if I may say so) for Negros." [*Aquel color negro que entonces hazia variedad y causaba hermosura se convertiria en tizne y mancha y como en sambenito (digamolos asi) de los Negros.*] (Sandoval, *De Instauranda* 19)

[162] Note that this crisis has more than one cause. Another way to approach it is to reckon with the representational capabilities of the stage: the theatre might not be the best media or literary genre for representing racial hybridity. Because of its technical limitations, theatre might actually function better when representing stark racial contrasts (Europeans versus Moors, Indians, and Blackamoors) than elusive hybridity, where differences might not be as visible as racial classifications would have us think. It is remarkable for instance, that hardly any *mestizo* character should be found, to my knowledge, in a theatre that was so fond or Indian characters. Were the ethnic difference between *mestizos* and *indios* or *mestizos* and *blancos* too hard to render on stage at a distance from the audience? Theatre is after all, a medium of high visibility.

Although little is known about the condition of Spanish *mulatos* in the period, *mulato*s seem to have generated anxieties. According to Alessandro Stella, at the turn of the seventeenth century, the archives tell us that *mulatas* were disproportionately involved in legal cases of concubinage or prostitution, and those numbers reveal the sexual appeal of those women in Spanish society—which Lope de Vega's plays already emphasized a hundred years earlier. Because sexual relations, consensual or not, were often consumed in clandestinity, *mulatas* "embodied the rupturing of the social, racial, and moral order" (Stella 174). Not only did *mulatas'* hyper-sexualization threaten the family structure upon which social order relies: Stella notes that the practice of abandoning children at the Hospital (he studies in particular records of the Casa Cuna of Cadix), regardless of actual motivations, ensured that the children abandoned by their *mulata* mother would grow up free (Stella 185). Most children were not abandoned at birth, but many illegitimate children were, and thus, the hyper-sexualization of *mulatas* had the long-term effect of increasing the number of free Afro-diasporic people in the Peninsula.

The very rare representations of free *mulatos* on stage in the period suggest that they were perceived as a potential threat. While *mulatas* are overwhelmingly maids on stage, the very rare male *mulato* characters that can be found in seventeenth century drama are well represented by the hero of the *entremés El galeote mulato* (1663), written by Vincente Suárez de Deza y Avila for the court. It was inspired from a *jácara*—a short musical act to be performed between the acts of a comedia—written by D. Jerónimo de Cáncer in 1651, *El mulato de Andújar*, possibly related to another anonymous *entremés* dated 1656, *El mulato de Huescar*. The comedic genre of the *jácara* represented low-lifes, and in particular, the world of criminals. In this *entremés,* the *mulato* de Vallecas is sent to the galleys, and his close friend [*comadre*], La Chaves, together with two prostitutes, celebrate his career as a thief before he is taken away. The

character of La Chaves herself was probably a *mulata*, for, as Jonathan Schorsch reminds us, "in Inquisition testimony, slaves seem to reserve the term *compadre* for other slaves or free *Mulatos/Mulatas*" (Schorsch 32). Thus, the only extent theatrical representation of a *mulato* man (to my knowledge) shows a criminal, a threat to the community about to be put away, and a *mulata*, visually associated with prostitution and depicted as a passive accomplice aiding and supporting this threat to the social order.

Baltasar Fra-Molinero argues that the early modern literary representations of *mulatos* and *mulatas* spring from "bad conscience shared by the audience," the awareness that *mulatos* "are the result of illegitimate unions" (Fra-Molinero, "ser mulato" 126). For Fra-Molinero, "illegitimacy" is the keyword to understand the status and perception of *mulatos* in early modern Spanish society: it explains why, "guilds, brotherhoods, universities and the Church approve one after the other, on both sides of the Atlantic, norms and dispositions to exclude *negros* and *mulatos* from those institutions" (Fra-Molinero, "ser mulato" 127). Such dispositions systematically foreclosed perspectives of professional advancement for many free persons of color; should there be any pinch of truth to the association of *mulatos* with the underworld in the short plays discussed above, the impact of those exclusionary dispositions cannot be overestimated in bringing about this situation.

In the colonies, *mulatos* could navigate community boundaries for their own benefit, especially as their number increased spectacularly, to the point of taking over the *negro* slave population despite the intensification of the transatlantic slave trade.[163] In 1568, a letter sent by the King to the Real Audiencia of Mexico, mentions that the numerous *mulatos* and *mestizos*

[163] In New Spain for instance, between 1570 and 1646, the creole population, mostly comprised of free *mulatos* according to Herman Bennett, grew fiftyfold. In 1646, there were 116,529 creoles, as opposed to 35,089 Novo-Spaniards born in Africa (Bennett 23).

who "only know their relatives on their mothers' side, stay with them," which could "over time, become a problem."[164] The same year, a general law for the Indies extended to *mulatos* and *zamboigos* the interdiction to carry weapons (Lucena Salmoral 183). How the anxieties surrounding the rise of *mulatos* in the colonies transpired in the metropole remains to be shown in greater detail by historians, but, surely, those anxieties crystallized around *mulatos'* ability to claim allegiance to different communities, to claim the privileges proper to more than one ethno-social group, to live performative lives akin to what Barbara Fuchs calls "passing"—and passing "up," most of the time.

The anxieties attached to *mulatos* in early modern Spanish culture were also linked to the threat that *mulatos* constituted in a culture obsessed with racial legibility and classification. The ethnic difference of a *mulato*, in the eye of a white Spaniard, was often no less visible than the difference of a *negro*, but it was less legible. In that sense the racial illegibility of *mulatos* played into the widespread pre-existing anxieties attached to the hybrid subjects that are *conversos* and *moriscos*. In particular, *moriscos* and *mulatos* seem to have been bound together in cultural imagination. For instance, Sandoval's previously cited observation that some *negros* (presumably mixed Afro-diasporic people) have the color of "cooked quince" echoes the phrase —noted by Barbara Fuchs— used in documents that inventory the sale and redemption of slaves during the Moorish rebellion in the Alpujarras (1569-1571), to describe some Moors: "white tending to cooked quince."[165] *Mulatos* shared their brown skin tone with some Moriscos, and

[164] "*Y que como no conocen otros deudos sino los de sus madres, se juntan con ellos, de que andando el tiempo podria haber inconvenientes*." (qtd. in Lucena Salmoral 179)

[165] For Spaniards, "Moors came in all shades, from '*color moreno*' (tawny) or '*color negra*' (black) to '*color blanco que tira un poco a membrillo cocho*' (white tending to cooked quince) and even, frequently, '*color blanca*' (white)" (Fuchs, "Spanish Race" 95).

what they shared with *all* Moriscos was their inherent ability to trouble strict racial classifications, precisely because they could pass as other than *mulatos* if needed.[166]

This was even more so the case with their children. It is fair to assume that the overwhelming majority of illegitimate children born from *mulatas* had a white father: some of those children, lighter-skinned than their mothers, could, especially when they were born or had become free, pass as white. That might have been the case for Giron in *Servir a señor discreto,* and that might have been what Elvira knew. Some of the most famous *pinturas de castas* from the mid-eighteenth century, such as those painted by Miguel Cabrera, seem to acknowledge this ability of children born from a white father and a *mulata* mother to pass as white, when they indicate that such children are called *moriscos* (Fig.9). Associating those children with *moriscos*, *pinturas de castas* do not classify those children as white, but as anxiety-provoking *passers-as-white*. Could this explain the mysterious negative connotations attached to *cholos*, the children of *mulatos*, in Garcilaso de la Vega's *Comentarios reales?*[167]

Based on the idea that "in theatrical performances . . . stage impersonations vividly enact the crisis of categories that passing so often represents" (Fuch, *Passing* 113), we also have to consider the impact of the actors' whiteness itself on the audience. Indeed, the performance of *mulato* parts by white actors and actresses, constituting a form of passing as non-white for a white Spaniard, could easily evoke its symmetrical opposite for audience, the passing as white

[166] As a woman of mixed European and Subsaharan African descent, I have been asked several times and in several Western countries whether I came from Morocco, Egypt, India, or the Caribbean. The racial illegibility of *mulatos* is a persisting phenomenon.

[167] "The children of *mulatos* and *mulatas* are called *Cholos*; the word comes from the Caribbean islands of Barlovento and means dog, but not a purebred dog but one of those small lowly yapping dogs. Spaniards use it to discredit or to insult someone." [*A los hijos destos [mulato y mulata] llaman Cholo es vocable de las islas de Barlovento, quiere decir perro, no de los castizos sino de los muy vellacos goçcones: y los Españoles usan del por infamia y vituperio.*] (Garcilaso 255)

for a non-white Spaniard. In that sense, the mechanisms of theatrical cross-racial performance connected directly to the widespread perception of *mulatos* and their descendants as passers. In a culture so deeply invested in making invisible forms of racialized difference visible (in the case of *conversos* and *moriscos),* Subsahran Africans, with their visible and legible form of difference assuaged anxieties. But Afro-descendants of mixed heritage, with all their shades of beige and brown skin, their ability to pass, and their tendency to multiply by virtue of their sexual appeal to white Spaniards, reactivated those old anxieties.

To synthesize, while their dramatic representations make explicit the widespread perception of *mulatos* as threats of various kinds (sexual, moral, criminal, economic) to the social order, the fractured semiotics of *mulato* blackface convey perceptions of *mulatos* as passers who destabilized a racial order based on legibility and classification. Indeed, spectators could not but notice the contradictions between the ways *mulato* characters spoke (white), looked (brown), and were talked about (black). The strategy used by early seventeenth century theatre-makers to represent *mulato* characters, combining something white (unaccented delivery), something black (poetic imagery), and something brown (make-up) followed the additive logic of racial classification that we find in the *pinturas de castas*, but, in performance, such addition must have been also perceived as contradiction (what I have called a hermeneutic crisis). The whole logic could be perceived as simultaneously sound and unsound. In other words, if the invention of *mulato* characters on stage participates in the larger cultural movement towards the racial classification of imperial subjects, it also registers through performance the intricacy—if not the impossibility—of this endeavor.[168]

[168] Questioning the logic of racial classification was not the prerogative of *mulato* characters. Barbara Fuchs has shown that passing characters (*moriscos* and *conversos*) "challenge the strictures of counter-Reformation orthodoxy" in Cervantes' work, including in his dramatic works (Fuchs, *Passing* x).

To conclude this reflexion on disruptive theatrical depictions of *mulatos*, I will turn to visual culture, to gaze upon the best known painting of *mulatos* in the period: Velázquez's gorgeous "*Cena de Emaús"*, known as "*La mulata*", and painted between 1620 and 1622, during the painter's stay in Seville, naturally (Fig. 10). If the semiotics of blackface ruptures in the absence of a new poetics of brownness, Velázquez's painting is a masterclass in visual poetics of brownness. About 80% of the canvas is covered with brown paint, and Velázquez uses a number of brown shades that would have made even Alonso de Sandoval dizzy, from the brown wood of the kitchen table where the *mulata* is working, the brownness of the dimly-lit walls, the brownness of the water jugs and the basket, the brownness necessary to convey the brilliance of the metallic pan, and the brownness of the *mulata*'s dress, the brownness of her skin, her hair, and even her shadow. The *mulata* is a cook, a house servant, like most slaves in Seville. She is preparing the dinner at Emmaus for Jesus and his disciples, who are visible, framed in the upper-left corner of the canvas. By inserting her anachronistically into a biblical scene, Velazquéz is replicating the inclusion of Afro-diasporic people into the Catholic community. By putting her menial, gendered, and racialized labor in the foreground and Christ in the background, Velázquez shifts the expected perspective, and emphasizes the idea that this inclusion of Afro-diasporic people into the Spanish community takes place in a servile mode.

The arched silhouette of the *mulata* and her general demeanor do not seem defiant to the viewer; the economically exploited woman seems invisible to the holy men in the background. Yet, her eyes are fixed in the cooking pan, which looks like it is about to fall down. She does not try to prevent its fall, and the metallic clanging that will undoubtedly ensue is about to interrupt the grave conversations of the holy men, and to draw their attention to her, albeit briefly. A

disruption is about to happen on the canvas, and this disruption of a foundational communal moment of the Catholic community guaranteeing the social *status quo* (Jesus celebrates a Eucharist during the Supper at Emmaus) is explicitly associated with the *mulata*. Velázquez certainly does not depict the *mulata* as a criminal about to be sent to the galleys, a temptress about to seduce the white apostles, or a rioter eager to put her hands on weapons. He depicts her sympathetically, and within this sympathetic portrayal we can distinguish a familiar question: if indeed they belong, then what is the exact place of *mulatos* in the Spanish imperial community? In the social order? And in the racial order?

Those questions had been answered in the case of enslaved *negros*, and the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface reflects the terminal quality of the answer provided to them on stage. But what about *mulatos*? The same old questions applied now to a new ethnic group born from the slavery-based imperial expansion, a demographic group on the rise. The same white anxieties about *mulato* integration manifest in the disruption that is about to happen on Velazquéz's canvas and the fracturing of the semiotics of brownface that happened on the stages where Lope de Vega's Sevillian plays were repeatedly performed.

5) The Legacy of the Commodifying Hermeneutics of Blackface

The case of the *mulata* is a test case in which Lope de Vega pressured the representational capabilities of the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface he created on stage, utilizing the black/white divide upon which that hermeneutics relies to fracture the semiotics of brownface. But the test case did not threaten the existence or popularity of the original device. Indeed, not only did the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface keep thriving in the *negro* plays contemporary with Lope de Vega's *mulata* plays: it clearly passed on to the following

generation of playwrights and performers. In the remaining pages of this chapter, I show how the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface found its way into one of the most famous *comedias* of the seventeenth century, Andrés de Claramonte's *El valiente negro en Flandes*, and I show how the development of a minor yet solid burlesque version of the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface bears witness to the dominance of this device on stage in 1620s Spain. In other words, I read several forms of imitation, such as emulation (in *El valiente negro en Flandes*) and parody (in a burlesque corpus) as homage paid to Lope de Vega's commodifying hermeneutics of blackface by later seventeenth century playwrights such as Andrés de Claramonte, Diego Ximénez de Enciso, Calderón de la Barca, and Juan de Matos Fragoso.

Andrés de Claramonte's *El valiente negro en Flandes*, presumably written between 1621 and 1625*,* follows the itinerary of Juan, an Afro-Spaniard born in Merida, Extremadura.[169] Juan is an extremely ambitious young slave who refuses to follow the advice given by Doña Juana, his mistress, to remain a water-seller in Merida. Instead, Juan dreams of becoming a hero: he enlists in the army and leaves for the front in the Low Countries. In the army, he encounters deep-seated racism, and fights his way to the top. On the front, he accomplishes several exploits; notably, he captures William of Orange, earning Spaniards one of their greatest victories. Impressed by his

[169] *El valiente negro en Flandes* was published in 1638 in Barcelona, but it must have been written long before, since Claramonte died in 1626. Although the exact date of composition of the play is unknown, the focus of the play suggests that it was written in the early 1620s. The play revisits the successful operations led by the Spanish Duke of Alba for crushing the early phase of the Dutch revolt in the 1560s-1570s. One can imagine that this theme would have been particularly welcome on the early seventeenth century Spanish stage at some point between the end of the Twelve Years Truce, in 1621, and the death of the formidable military leader Maurice of Orange in 1625 (the play features a wish-fulfilling scene where William of Orange, Maurice's father, is captured by the Spaniards). John Beusterien interestingly notes that the play relocates in Flanders, on the Northern European front, the exploit of a historical Afro-Spanish soldier, Juan Valiente, who was key in the 1550 conquest of Chile (Beusterien 114). The imperial propaganda in which it participates partly accounts for the play's immense popularity in the seventeenth century. For a fuller account of the evidence of this play's popularity, see *An Eye on Race: Perspectives from Theater in Imperial Spain*. Bucknell University Press, 2006, pp. 114-115. Not only was the play performed in some of the most important cities of the peninsula (Madrid, Valencia, Seville, and Barcelona), it became a classic in the eighteenth century Mexican repertoire. The influence of the play on later playwrights is visible in plays such as Agustín Moreto's *La Negra por el honor* (1668). Claramonte's play inspired a sequel in the early eighteenth century.

valor, the Duke of Alba takes Juan under his protection: he takes him to Madrid to meet the King who thanks him personally, gives him a competent pension, and promotes him "*maestre de campo*." Juan is greeted as a hero at home, where, in his new glory, he fixes the romantic subplot of the play, which involves the honor of the white women in his household, Doña Leonor and Doña Juana. He redresses the wrongs of the former, and marries the latter.

Claramonte's play takes up the legacy of Lope de Vega's commodifying hermeneutics of blackface. In a sense, the play can be read as the protagonist's rhetoric-wielding apprenticeship: Juan's successful climbing of the social ladder coincides with his successful utilization of the poetics of commodification.

The play starts with a failure. In the opening scene of the play, Juan quickly discovers that his rational arguments in favor of racial equality (monogenesis, climate theory, social determinism) do not reach his racist white interlocutors. The response that Juan gets from soldiers who will not let him enroll in the army is frustrating: "Look, look how he holds a philosophical discourse instead of a frying pan!" [*Oyga, que discursos tiene, / Filosoficos tambien / El negro envés de sarten*] (Claramonte 158r). Juan tries to take the conversation back on the argumentative track, but in vain: "Juan: We originate from the sun which embraces us./ Second lieutenant: So you are coal with a soul, basically?" [*Juan: Del sol nuestro origen viene / que el nos abraza. Alfarez: Seran carbon con alma*] (Ibid.). This is a turning point for Juan: the moment when he understands that, to win this battle and get what he wants, he has to let go of arguments and fight the battle on the rhetorical field as his opponents. He starts speaking the soldiers' language: metaphors. He responds, using the common sixteenth century metaphors that we encountered both in Sandoval's work and in Lope's black saints' plays: "Coal yes, and the kind of coal which, once enflamed, turns every spark into a beam of light" [*Y carbon / Que*

encendido en la ocasion / Rayos da por chispas] (Ibid.). Juan rehearses some of the most popular commodifying metaphors of the period to defend the beauty of blackness: "Jet finds its place on the most beautiful throats . . . The beautiful porphyry is black, as is ebony . . . Pentarb is black that protects against burning fire" [*El azabache se aplica a la garganta mas bella . . . Negro es el porfido hermoso y el ebano . . . Negra es la pentarbe piedra contra el fego riguroso*] (Ibid.). The soldiers answer: "We know the qualities of blackness, but it's a vile color in the presence of ivory" [*Las excelencias sabemos/ Del negro, color vil/ en presencia de marfil*] (Ibid.). A fight ensues, and Juan has to run away. His first rhetorical battle is lost.

Incrementally, Juan makes progress over the course of the play, however. Ultimately, when Juan, having captured the Prince of Orange, is invited to dine with the Duke of Alba and his noble prisoner, he orchestratess the conversation most skillfully:

Juan*:* I obey you, and I sit down.

I will now look like black jet

Between two crystals.

Orange: I would prefer your jet, Captain,

To all the ivory to ennobles me. (Claramonte 163v)[170]

Implying that he would trade his own whiteness for Juan's blackness, the prince of Orange's lines reverse the hierarchy between jet and ivory established in the opening by the soldiers in the opening scene. By the end of the play, Juan knows how to use poetic commodification, and wins.

While this rhetoric helps Juan rise through the ranks and through Spanish social hierarchies, Claramonte's play leaves no doubt to the spectator that this rhetoric has a terrible

[170] "*Juan*: *Por obedencia me siento/ Y sere entre dos cristales/ Negro azabache./ Orange: Quisiera mas, Capitan,/ Su azabache/ Que el marfil que me engrandece."* (Claramonte 163v)

real life counterpart: slavery. At the beginning of Act 2, while Juan and his black servant Antonillo are waiting to be introduced to the king, three courtiers start mocking them:

> Don Pedro*:* Look at those *negros*: what conspicuous figures . . .
>
> Don Francisco: I have seen him waiting here in the antechamber for the last two days.
>
> Don Martin: Look how gravely the dog perambulates!
>
> Don Francisco*:* And his servant matches his steps.
>
> Don Pedro*:* They must be worth three thousand *reales*, servant and master together. (Claramonte 175r) [171]

The courtiers then sneeze and fart at the two black men in order to provoke them, until Juan fights them. The courtiers receive help, and Juan and Antonillo only survive because the Duke and the King interrupt the scene. This scene, invested with a critical function because of its affinities with the genre of the *entremés*,[172] reminds spectators that the same characters around whom the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface is deployed are most often subjected to slavery, underlining the cultural participation of the theatrical device in real life black reification.

By contrast with Claramonte's straightforward recuperation of the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface devised by Lope de Vega, other playwrights developed a burlesque parody of this device. Those burlesque versions of the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface

---

[171] "*Don Pedro: No reparaís en los negros/ Que son notables figuras./ Don Francisco: Dos dias ha que los veo/ En la antecamara asi./ Don Martin: Con que gravedad/ El perro se pasea!/ Y las pisadas/ el paje le va midiendo./ Don Pedro: Bien valdran tres mil reales,/ Paje y amo."* (Claramonte 175r)

[172] Baltasar Fra-Molinero interestingly notes that this scene has the scatological dimension of an *entremés* (Fra-Molinero, *Imagen* 186), but he does not unfold the implications of this formal observation, which I offer to do here. First, the scene also has the length of an *entremés*, and its insertion at the opening of Act 3 resembles the natural location of an *entremés:* in-between two acts of a *comedia*. *Entremeses* as a genre often functioned as counterpoints to the main action of the *comedia* they interrupted: they often contradicted or commented comically on some aspect of the c*omedia*, disrupting the possibility for the whole performance to issue any totalizing message. What the formal features of this scene suggest is that it articulates a critique of the play's denouement and of the wish-fulfilling image of Spanish society as a society affording social mobility to Afro-Spaniards.

deploy themselves in carnivalesque contexts, within the realm of appetites, and they liken black body parts not to precious commodities, but to trivial, yet essential everyday commodities: food.

Diego Ximénez de Enciso produces such a burlesque parody of the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface in the last scene of *La comedia famosa de Juan Latino*, which was printed in Madrid in 1652, but must have been written decades before, since Ximénez de Enciso died in 1634.[173] Juan Latino is a historical figure—an exceptional one. Born in 1518 in North Africa, Juan was brought to Spain as a slave at age twelve. In Granada, he became part of the household of the young Duke of Sesa, who would be his lifelong friend, protector, and master. After studying at the Cathedral's school, Juan graduated from the University of Granada where he excelled in Latin and Greek—which earned him his surname. A humanist scholar and a prolific writer, he acquired fame with his extensive epic poem in Latin, *Austriadis Carmen*, which celebrates the victory at Lepanto. Ximénez de Enciso's play dramatizes Juan Latino's rise in Spanish society and the obstacles he overcame, collapsing chronologically his obtaining the very prestigious Chair of Grammar and Latin at the Cathedral of Granada where he taught for twenty years, and his much talked-about marriage with one of his students, Ana Carlobal, the daughter of the Duke's administrator, a white woman of erudition and renowned beauty.

[173] Although the exact date of composition of this play too is unknown, the allusions to the character of Juan Latino that can be found in *El valiente negro in Flandes* have led several scholars to believe that Andrés de Claramonte's play came in the wake of Ximénez de Enciso's play. We can imagine the popularity of Ximénez de Enciso's play in the period based on its influence on later playwrights, in particular, its influence over Calderón. Indeed, we know thanks to Albert Sloman that *La Niña de Gómez Arias* is a *refundición*, a re-writing of an older play by Luiz Vélez de Guevara (see Albert Sloman. *The Dramatic Craftmanship of Calderon, His Use of Earlier Plays*, Oxford: Dolphin Books co., 1958, pp. 160-161). According to Sloman, Calderón added a Moorish character to Guevara's play, a black Moor called Cañeri. Contrary to the Moorish leader Avenjafar of the original play, Calderón's Cañeri is executed at the end of the play, together with the villain Gomez Arias, because Queen Isabel refuses to pardon Gomez' love crimes against Dorotea and the Moriscos' political crimes against the Crown. Based on Sloman's description of the plays, it seems very likely that Calderón's *refundición* of Vélez de Guevara's play was informed by his knowledge of Ximénez de Enciso's *Juan Latino*, which dramatizes the repression of the Morisco rebellion in the Alpujarras and whose villainous black *moro* is called Cañeri.

In the last scene of the play, Juan Latino graduates in the presence of the archbishop, the Duke of Sesa, and Don Juan of Austria in person: he receives his doctoral degree, which will allow him to take the position he has been awarded at the Cathedral. The graduation is a festive ceremony that includes a *vexamen*. A *vexamen* [vexation] was the ritual that early modern Spanish doctoral candidates had to undergo in order to receive their degree. It was a highly entertaining public performance in which a member of the university would read a lengthy satire caricaturing some of the doctoral candidate's personal shortcomings—preferably in verse. These circumstances allow and even force Castillo, Juan's good friend and colleage, to produce a burlesque portrait of the black graduate. The *vexamen* begins with a couple of scholarly-themed furniture metaphors (desk and inkpot) that operate as transitions: they allow Castillo's satire to gradually shift its focus from Juan's intellect to his body. [174] Castillo proceeds and soon deploys strange tropes of poetic commodification:

> Listen to me, Protonegro,
> The best of all your caste,
> Listen to me, you red wine decanter
> Listen to me, you rotten fig
> Listen to me, you stocking dye

[174] Rejoicing over the imminent *vexamen*, one of the students starts commodifying Juan Latino as he declares: "Juan Latino is sufficiencly well-known for Fame to say that, today, the royal city of Grenade furnished her study with a walnut desk." [*Oy Granada la Real/ diga, pues es tan notorio, / fama que a vuestro escritorio / dio un bufete de nogal.*] (Ximénez de Enciso 10v-61). Walnut being used in the early modern period as a deep dying agent, there is little doubt that the student is trying to capture both Juan's soul (his scholarly activity) and body (his blackness) with this awkward furniture metaphor. After a formal and rigidly codified procession whose theatricality is emphasized by Ximénez de Enciso's stage directions, Castillo (who, according to Ana, has a wonderful sense of humor) starts performing his satire in ways that echo the student's attempt. He first states that "Juan will be remembered as the inkpot where Fame would dip its quill" [*ha de quedar por tintero / A pluma de la fama*] (Ximénez de Enciso 61v). Juan Latino accepts his own commodification as Fame's worktool by playing along with Castillo. He answers "I beg your highness: let that inkpot be of lead and silver instead, for Negros are horn people" [*A vuestra alteza suplico / sea de plomo y de plata / que son los Negros de cuerno*] (Ibid.). It is not obvious which value of the word "horn" Juan Latino is alluding to in order to create a double-entendre: "Horned" as in cuckolded? "Horn" as in the material that can get stained by ink? "Horn" as in the ivory that, once burned, was used to create rich dark inks? Or "*cuerno*" as in the equivalent for "hell" in Spanish slang? In any case, Juan is mobilizing the material sense of the word "horn," commodifying all Afro-diasporic people in the process. The academic audience is delighted with this self-commodifying pun and cheers him for it.

Listen to me, you prune,
Listen to me, you Benedictine sock
Listen to my jest—and jest with me,
Even if your color
Is not berry, but chestnut[175]
. . . . . .
Master Hood writes in
His learned Miscellanies
That, one day, Nature
Invited in certain goddesses
Of this region
Who were passing by.
It was a Saturday, and, to her chagrin,
She had nothing to offer them,
So she started cooking tripe —
Some say it was beef tripe.
In her wisdom, Nature
Made a big sausage with tripes and blood
And started throwing into the stuffing
Letters, languages, and various essences,
Nominative cases, gerunds,
In short, all of Grammar,
Theology, and the arts.
But she threw in too much pepper,
So that, when the sausage cooked,
It burst open, like a horse blanket.
Minerva, the goddess of war,
Seeing that the fair Duke of Sesa
Is the king of arms,
Sent the sausage to his house.
There it has been hanging from the fireplace,
For as many years as you can see on that face,
Without ever being released,
For sausages can be slaves
. . . . . .
O, you Latin chorizo! (Ximénez de Enciso 61v-62v)[176]

[175] Untranslatable pun. Castillo is punning on homophones: "*vaya*" means "jest," while "*baya*" means "berry."

[176] *"Escucha, protonegro/ De todos los de tu casta;/ Garrafa de tinto, escucha,/ Escucha, breva pasada,/ Escucha, tinte de medias,/ Escucha ciruela pasa,/ Escucha escarpin Benito/ Escucha mi vaya; y vaya/ De joyu, aunque tu color/ No es vaya sino castaña . . . / Cuenta el Maestro Capucho/ En sus doctos Miscelaneas/ Que un dia naturaleza/ Tuvo ciertas convidadas/ Diosas de aquellos contornos,/ Que de camino passaban;/ Era Sabado, y muy triste/ De no poder regalarlas,/ Se puso a hacer un menudo,/ Y aun dicen que era de baca./ Tomo una larga morcilla/ La naturaleza sabia,/ Y comenzo a echar en ella/ Letras, lenguas, y essencias varias,/ Nominativos, gerundios,/ En fin toda la Gramatica,/ La Teologia, y los artes;/ Pero echo pimienta harta,/ Que al cozer esta morcilla/ Salio como una gualdrapa./ Minerva, diosa de la Guerra,/ Viendo que es rey de las armas/ El claro Duque*

This running metaphor of Juan Latino as a "chorizo" peppered with knowledge is the grandiose culmination of a long list of food metaphors—wine, fig, prune, chestnut, berry—that turn both Juan's mind and body into consumable delicious commodities. The image of Juan Latino as a tripe/blood sausage carries strong phallic connotations (especially when the sausage "bursts open" under the effect of cooking heat), together with scatological connotations, which endow the image with a burlesque dimension (the lofty Juan Latino is treated in plain style) and with a grotesque dimension as Bakhtin defines it, mobilizing the full range of the bodily lower stratum.

Calderón, who knew *la comedia de Juan Latino*,[177] also participated in the production of this burlesque and grotesque version of the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface when he wrote his *entremés Las carnestolendas*, which, according to María Luisa Lobato, was performed between 1646 and 1652 (qtd. in Rodríguez López-Vázquez, "las carnestolendas" 478).[178] Calderón's carnivalization of black bodies takes place, fittingly, in a short play about Carnival, when, during Shrovetide, two sisters try to convince their stingy father to give them the funds for staging a play. The *galán* of one of the sisters, disguised as a *gracioso*, offers his services as a performer, and samples the roles he can play for the father. One of the roles is that of a *negro*:

(*He puts on a mask and a red bonnet)*

Clown: And here is the little *negro*,

Wooing those ladies

---

de Sesa,/ Embiosela a su casa./ Donde ha los años que veis/ Que esta al humero colgada,/ Sin que la dé libertad,/ Que aun hay morcilla esclavas . . . / O chorizo de Latines!"(Ximénez de Enciso 61v-62v)

[177] See footnote #173.

[178] Note that Calderón also imitated the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface on a serious mode. In *La sibila del oriente* (1682), for instance, Irán flatters the Queen of Sheba in those terms: "You are the goddess to whom those mountains and forests offer statues of ebony and jasper, because they resemble you in color" [*Eres la diosa a quien dan / Estos montes y estas selvas / Estatuas de ebano y jaspe / Porque en la tez se parezca*]. (Calderón, *sibila* 338)

With his face that looks like blood pudding

And his Burgundy bonnet. (Calderón, "las carnestolendas" 147-148)[179]

The reference to blood pudding echoes Castillo's v*examen* in *Juan Latino* and turns the *negro* into a delicious commodity that, interestingly, can only be consumed by Christians (blood pudding is usually made with pork blood), just like black slaves could only be owned by Christians in the Spanish empire. Even in its burlesque version, the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface maintains ties with the real life practices of slavery that it models on stage.

Finally, in *El yerro del entendido*, whose first recorded performance took place in 1660 (Urzaíz Tortajada 432), Juan de Matos Fragoso has the ridiculous character of Hormigo produce a burlesque version of the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface. In Italy, the *galán* Enrique, courting the beautiful Porcia, has just declared his love to her indirectly in verses that pleased the lady. Hormigo does not want to be left out, and parodies Enrique by reading the supposedly better verses that he wrote for a "*criolla*" from Caracas:

I never burn for your brown complexion
Because its mischievous color
Looks like cane in bright red wine:
What a nice marmalade!
Your beautiful hair and eyebrow
Look like they belong to a frog,
Ana, or Nise, and your hands
Are as hard as sweet potatoes
. . . . . .
Such are the verse that I wrote
For this beautiful *mulata*
In a fancy fancy tone[180]

[179] "*Pónese mascarilla y bonete colorado./ Gracioso: Agora sale el negrillo/ requebrando aquestas damas,/ con su cara de morcilla/ y su bonete de grana."* (Calderón, "las carnestolendas" 147-148)

[180] The adjectival phrase "*tiquis miquis*" connotes a ridiculous form of loftiness, but "*taca maca*" is a neologism coined by a bad poet to echo that adjective. Individually, "*taca*" is a synonym for "*mancha*" [stain], and "*maca*" refers to the mark left on a fruit when it falls from the tree—the first part of the fruit to mature and then rot. While there is little doubt that Hormigo coined the "*taca maca*" neologism to emphasize the effect of *tiquismiquis*-ness, the

And a stained rotting meter. (Matos Fragoso 18)[181]

Hormigo re-uses the image of the wine used by Castillo in his *vexamen*, but, most interestingly, he compares the body parts of the *mulata criolla* from Caracas, Venezuela, to crops from the empire, not from the Peninsula: sugarcane marmalade, and sweet potatoes. Matos Fragoso takes up the *mulata* character experiment where Lope de Vega had left it off, on the burlesque mode.

This burlesque version of the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface for a *mulata* character reconciles visuals with language, by avoiding the poetic language predicated on an insurmountable black/white divide that characterized Lope's *mulata* plays. Indeed, bright red wine, sugarcane marmalade, and sweet potatoes are neither black nor white—no more than blood pudding, beef tripes, chorizo, fig, prune, chestnut, or berries. Instead, those food images span a wide chromatic range between red, orange, brown, and purple. In other words, it seems that the burlesque version of the commodifying hermeneutics of blackface (or the burlesque version of poetic commodification, when the character in question, such as Hormigo's *mulata*, is not produced on stage), unfolding in the exuberant contexts of carnival, *vexamen*, or satirical poetry, does not have the same chromatic expressive limitations as the original version.

Ximénez de Enciso's, Calderón's, and Matos Fragoso's plays lay open the possibility of an expansive poetics of browness that could include both *mulatos* and *negros* within its vast chromatic palette—moving away from both the recently coined *negro/mulato* divide and the old black/white chromatic compass. Such a utopian space of representation would destroy the

---

important connotations of the ideas of "stain" and "rotting mark" in relation to black skin in the early modern period inform my choice of translation.

[181] "*Jamás por tu color pardo/ Ardo, que su tez picaña/ Caña parece en aloque:/ O que linda marmelada!/ Tu cejas y tu cabello/ Bello parece de rana/ Ana, o Nise, y con teson/ Son tus dos manos batatas…/ Estos son los versos que/ Hice a tan bella mulata/ En tono de tiquis miquis,/ Y en metro de taca maca."* (Matos Fragoso 18)

foundations of the developing racial order based on classification that early modern Spanish theatre rendered and, to a very large extent, supported. It is no surprise then, that this subversive move should be made in burlesque plays that unfold under the auspices of carnival, a fleeting moment of social upheaval, a temporarily liberating mechanism of social control.

6) Conclusion: the Black Canon

An anonymous *entremés* published in 1691, *Las naciones,* shows that the same black plays that have received such sporadic attention from modern scholars were recognized by early modern Spanish playwrights as constituting, properly speaking, a canon. In that *entremés*, a woman convinces a man to marry her. To do so, she promises to give him a kingdom, the empty kingdom of "Trapobana," and to transport him there with her magic powers, since she has the reputation of being a witch. The man accepts, she makes him sit on a broomstick, and uses the magic of stagecraft to make him believe that he is travelling far away from Spain. On their way to Trapobana, the couple makes stops in Galicia, in France, in Turkey, and in *Guinea*. The pseudo-witch has actors enter and perform Guinean *couleur locale* for her gullible husband:

(*Enter Negro and Negra, singing and dancing).*

Both, singing: Zucuruzu curuzu Mandingo!

Negro: I am your *negro* from Seville!

Negra: And I am *El negro de mejor amo*!

Negro: I am *El negro valiente en Flandes*!

Negra: And I am *El negro de cuerpo blanco*!

Zucuruzu curuzu! (Exeunt). ("naciones" 30)[182]

Citing landmark plays by, respectively, Lope de Vega, Andrés de Claramonte, and Marcelo de Ayala y Guzmán, those characters rehearse the corpus of the present chapter, and they define themselves as synchretic archetypes. Just as illuminating, perhaps, is the sentence that immediately precedes the *negros*' entrance, when the husband declares: "I'm a traitor, because I act friendly with them, but, really, I crave to sell them" [*soy traydor con ellos/ pues pareciendo su amigo/ rabiando estoy por venderlos*] (Ibid.). This *entremés,* produced at sunset of the *Siglo de Oro*, leaves no doubt as to the existence of a black dramatic canon that deserves to be studied as such, and no doubt as to the embeddedness of that canon in the economy of slavery.

Rojas' witticism notwithstanding, early modern Spanish actors were no black slaves, and most importantly, black slaves were no actors, for the stage was more invested in representing mainstream white affects towards Afro-Spaniards through the practice of blackface than in (re)presenting Afro-Spaniards themselves. Using the evolving hermeneutic configurations of blackface between 1550 and 1650 as a window to look into an evolving mainstream white racial psyche reveals that, if Afro-Spaniards, upon baptism, were increasingly perceived as members of the Spanish community in a servile capacity—as the "feet" of the body politic, to use Sandoval's image—, anxieties about the question of black integration in Spain did not disappear, neither from the public sphere nor from the stage. Rather, they were transferred, from *negros* onto the growing number of *mulatos* and other Spaniards of African descent whose place in Spanish and colonial societies rapidly became a bone of contention. Due to Spain's history of panic in the

[182] "*Salen Negro y Negra cantando y bailando. Cantando: Zucuruzu curuzu Mandinga. Negro: Yo zo neglo de Siviya/ Negra: Yo Negla del mejol amo. / Negro: Yo el Neglo valiente en Flandes./ Negra: Yo Negla del cuelpo blanco./ Zucuruzu curuzu, etc./ Vanse*." ("naciones" 30)[182]

face of invisible forms of racialized difference, anxieties surged when the hyper-visible difference of Afro-diasporic people became less legible. Early seventeenth century theatre reflects this transfer, this endurance of old questions in new demographic contexts.

Within the larger movement towards racial classification that characterizes the early seventeenth century Spanish cultural moment, theatre remained true to its characteristic ambivalence towards all ideological discourses. By developing an enduring commodifying hermeneutics of blackface, and by trying to create a *mulato* stock character, it supported the emergent imperial racial order and the practice of institutional slavery that this order justified. By fracturing the semiotics of blackface/brownface in performance, and by developing a utopian chromatic discourse in carnivalesque burlesque plays, it discreetly questioned the possibility and the practical logic of classifying an increasingly hybridized population of "passers."

CHAPTER 3

BLACKSPEAK:
ACCENTING RACE IN EARLY MODERN THEATRE

(I'm just going to say this right now so we can get it over with:
I don't know what a real slave sounded like. And neither do you.)
(Jacobs-Jenkins 43)

1) Introduction: Beyond Blackface

In *Fragoa d'Amor*, a tragicomedy written by Gil Vicente in 1525 to celebrate the wedding of John III of Portugal and the Spanish infanta Catherine of Austria, Cupid and Mercury, the gods of transformation, decide to celebrate the arrival of the new queen by giving the Portuguese people the opportunity to be re-cast, re-made, and hammered to perfection in their eponymous "Forge of Love." The first Portuguese to seize upon the gods' offer is Fernando, a black slave who asks to be turned "white like a chicken egg" [*branco como ovo de gallinha*], with a "very thin nose" [*Fazer nariz mui delgada*], and "thin lips" [*faze me beiça delgada*]. Disappointment ensues:

> *Negro exits from the forge, looking like a white gentleman. But they couldn't hammer blackspeak out of him. And so he says:*
> Negro**:** Now my hand #is white,
> And my leg #is white too
> But I still #talk black.
> If I still #talk black,
> *What is the point of looking white?
> If I still #speak in blackspeak
> And not in Portuguese,
> *What was all the hammering for?
> Mercury: That's all we could do.
> You got what you asked for. (Vicente 166)[183]

[183] "*Sahe o Negro da fragoa muito gentil/ Homem branco, porém a fala de negro/ Nao se pode tirar na fragoa, e elle diz:/ Negro: Ja mao minha branco estai,/ E aqui perna branco he,/ Mas a mi fala guiné:/ Se a mi negro falai,/*

In this scene, Gil Vicente, the prolific bilingual playwright who popularized *fala de preto* in Portuguese theatre and *habla de negros* in Spanish theatre—both of which I translate here as blackspeak—is drawing attention to the efficiency of a performance technique that marks Fernando, or "Furunando" as he calls himself, as irremediably black in the spectators' cognition, even when blackface has been removed. To wash an Ethiop white, visuals are not enough, Gil Vicente boldly states, for what spectators hear can be more important than what they see when it comes to reading race on stage.

Blackspeak is the theatrical rendition, scripted in playtexts such as *Fragoa d'Amor,* of any European country's vernacular language as it was spoken by this country's black population in the early modern period. Eminently comic, blackspeak relies on grammatical mistakes (such as incorrect conjugation, numbering, or gendering), occasional foreign lexical imports (from various early modern African languages), and, last but not least, phonetic distortions. Those three elements, grammatical, lexical, and phonetic, coalesce to form a standardized, recognizable, and imitable black accent on stage. Those distortions have been described in detail in the case of Iberian theatre by scholars such as Frida Weber de Kurlat, Edmund de Chasca, and Paul Teyssier. Meticulous linguistic analyses constitute the larger part of all research done on early

---

A mi branco para que?/ Se fala meu he negregado,/ E nao fala Portugas,/ Para que mi martelado?/ Mercurio: No podemos haver mas,/ Lo que pediste te han hecho." (Vicente 166) Josiah Blackmore first brought this text to my attention, and my translation of this passage is based upon his. When translating passages written in blackspeak, I have had to make decisions regarding the best way of rendering the linguistic distortions of a foreign language into English, and have come to the conclusion that it is an impossible task. On the one hand, trying to translate passages into early modern English blackspeak based on the only extant English play that uses it is hardly feasible, given the small number of blackspeak lines that the English archive has left us. On the other hand, using a caricature of any twenty-first century accent from the black diaspora as stand-in for early modern blackspeak (in addition to failing at rendering grammatical mistakes and lexical importations) is to make groundless assumptions about my readers' individual relations to those black diasporic accents. Most importantly, this work of translation would turn me into a producer of blackspeak, and I have no wish to participate in the reproduction of this racializing trope. Consequently, in this chapter, the grammatical mistakes of blackspeak are signaled with a star symbol immediately preceding the grammatically accented word or word group, and the phonetic distortions of blackspeak are signaled with a hash symbol immediately preceding the translation of the accented word or word group.

modern blackspeak; building upon that existing body of work, this chapter offers an interpretive perspective on this fascinating fixture of early modern theatre.

Blackspeak was instrumental in the creation of a black stereotype in the Iberian Peninsula. Blackspeak is indeed what William Labov calls "an accent of an accent" on stage: "Stereotypes . . . are an accent of an accent. They are the selection, inflection, and reading of a whole system of accents by a hostile community. A recuperation of the deviancy of the accent by reducing it to something simple, manageable and under the control of people outside the accent-community" (Labov 86). In the case of blackspeak, the "accent of an accent" conceptually participated in the creation of the very "accent-community" it pretended to represent. Indeed, John M. Lipski, who tries to recover some elements of actual early modern Afro-Hispanic language from theatrical blackspeak and aptly discusses methodological difficulties as he does so, points out that "at least six major African language families were involved in the Afro-Hispanic mix (Atlantic, Mande, Kru, Kwa, Congo-Benue, and Bantu), each of which has totally different structures, and which share almost no common denominator at all" (Lipski 9). Consequently, speakers from each of those linguistic groups learned, appropriated, and—as any language-learner does—distorted Spanish idiosyncratically, depending on their mother tongue. In other words, there was not a single Afro-Spanish accent in early modern Spain, but many of them. The conflation of such a variety of accents into one single theatrical sound is the work of an emergent white ear (the equivalent of what John Beusterien calls the emergent "white gaze" of seventeenth century Spanish theatre), and it reflects the contemporary conflation of numerous ethnic identities into a single racial identity in the mainstream perception of Afro-Spaniards. Such racializing auditory dynamics operated in all blackspeak-using European countries with an Afro-diasporic population.

The scripting of blackspeak in playtexts has its own technical limitations. For instance, Alain Fleischer notices that, "in some cases, an accent might have more to do with rhythm than with phonetic pronunciation" (Fleischer 39). Indeed, an unusual grouping or un-grouping of words in delivery disrupts the flow of a sentence, and often betrays the speaker as non-native. Fleischer's observation is based on his experience as a French native speaker, but for native speakers of a stress-based language—such as English, or Spanish—detecting a non-native speaker is even easier. Nothing gives away an almost-bilingual-ESL speaker like stressing the wrong syllable in a polysyllabic word. Similarly, the accent of an early modern Afro-European whose native language was tonal—as is the case of most Bantu languages—was very likely to contain exotic-sounding tonalization (meaningful variations in pitch). Actors familiar with the sound of that accent could easily caricature it and include it in their own version of blackspeak. But rhythm-based, stress-based, and tone-based accents are unscriptable in drama print cultures that don't use the diacritic symbols used in manuscripts (as was the case of early modern Spanish print culture), or in languages that hardly use diacritic symbols at all (like the English language). Thus, playtexts cannot possibly render the full impact of blackspeak in performance: actors playing black parts could increase the intensity of scripted blackspeak using rhythm, stress, and tone-based modulations, depending on their own skills and taste. Similarly, actors could connect blackspeak to visual caricature (and thus to blackface) by seizing upon the demands placed by blackspeak upon their elocution as an opportunity to grimace. They could use their own mouth, jaws, and lips in keeping with the perennial fixation of racial caricatures on the fuller mouths of Afro-descendants.[184] In short, blackspeak was a modulable and combinable racializing device,

[184] The classic and infamous skit "*L'Africain*," by contemporary white French standup comedian Michel Leeb, widely available over the internet, gives a good idea of what such busy mouthwork can achieve in terms of racialization.

and playtexts reveal only the tip of this iceberg.

I call early modern stage black accents blackspeak in reference to Newspeak so as to emphasize the fact that, just like Orwell's language, it was an artificial language, a limiting language invented by the political and social powers that be in order to contain and control its fictional speakers on stage and, as we shall see in this chapter, the off stage Afro-diasporic people that they stood for. I also call it blackspeak instead of *habla de negros* or *língua de preto,* the terms traditionally used by scholars of Iberian theatre, because I hope to show that, although blackspeak was primarily an Iberian theatrical device, it came to operate across and beyond the borders of the Iberian peninsula, throughout Western Europe.

A transnational approach to the performance technique of blackspeak can open fresh avenues of inquiry for English early modern Race studies. Indeed, Ian Smith's recent call for an examination of non-visual tropes of racialization in early modern English literature, focusing on rhetoric, has paradoxically left unexamined the most immediate dimension of language in the playhouse: sound. This chapter means to fill this critical void by adopting a transnational approach and studying English blackspeak in relation to Spanish blackspeak, which has an older critical tradition. By doing so, I also wish, both in this chapter and in this dissertation, to counter the assumption, common among scholars of early modern Iberia, that there was a gap between a Peninsula that produced literary representations of blackness based on real observation, and the rest of Western Europe (especially England and France), which, allegedly, produced literary representations of blackness solely based on "purely literary notions from antiquity and the Middle-Ages" disconnected from social and historical realities (Fra-Molinero, *Imagen* 3).

A survey of the existing scholarship on *habla de negros* suggests that the critical focus

has slowly shifted in the twentieth century from how blackspeak relates to early modern Afro-Spaniards to what blackspeak can tell us about early modern white Spaniards.[185] In this chapter, I propose to take one step further in that direction. Indeed, in his doctoral dissertation soon to be published as a monograph on *habla de negros*, Nicholas Jones has recently dubbed blackspeak a form of "linguistic blackface" (N. Jones 145), and as the first two chapters of the present dissertation have shown, blackface only tells us about the affects and disposition of early modern white Europeans towards Afro-diasporic people and the colorline. Thus, I deliberately focus the present study on the white producers and consumers of blackspeak across Europe; I focus on how the production and consumption of blackspeak worked, what blackspeak did for white communities, and what topical anxieties it reveals or works out.

Nicholas Jones rightfully argues that "*habla de negros* must not be limited to the artificial or the mere comical. *Habla de negros* represents both a linguistic order and a racial order unanimously bound up in a surplus of historical moments and ideological constructions and perceptions" (N. Jones 24). Based on the premise that those dimensions of blackspeak are not simply additive, I turn to the politics of humor and I seek to understand the mechanisms through which "the mere comical" contributes to building "ideological constructions and perceptions." I look for the many ways in which the laughter that arose in playhouses when actors spoke in blackspeak affected the various audience members who emitted and heard it, as well as the Afro-

[185] Well into the twentieth century, blackspeak remained dismissed by scholars as mere gibberish. Understandably then, most of the twentieth century scholarly writing dedicated to *habla de negros* has been fuelled by linguistic concerns and has sought to assess the distance between blackspeak and authentic early modern Afro-Spanish languages (Edmund de Chasca, John M. Lipski, Antonio Salvador Plans) and to determine whether blackspeak replicated an Afro-Iberian language born in the Peninsula or in Portuguese outposts on the African continent (Paul Teyssier and Germán de Granda). Another group of scholars, more literarily oriented, have focused on the genealogy and evolution of blackspeak in the dramatic canon (Consolación Baranda Leturio), on its comedicity (Frida Weber de Kurlat), and its tendency to offer "a parody of other characters or official institutions" (Fra-Molinero, *Imagen* 23).

diasporic people with whom those audience members lived or interacted off stage.

To do so, in the first part of this chapter, I delineate the history of the development and spread of blackspeak across Western Europe, with an eye in particular on the correlation between the presence of blackspeak and the presence of real Afro-Europeans in various urban settings in the cases of Spain, Italy, England, and France. In the current state of historiography regarding the black presence in early modern Europe outside of Iberia, no definitive conclusion on the subject can be drawn. Yet it seems that, while blackspeak and real black presence did not always necessarily coincide, more often than not, they did. When they did, real Afro-European speech forms informed the development of blackspeak, and blackspeak could, in return, impact black lives in significant ways.

In the second part of this chapter, I show how blackspeak could impact black lives, as I analyze the comic mechanisms of blackspeak in the light of Freud's theory of laughter: I close read Tirso de Molina's 1635 *entremés El negro,* and I show that, causing audience members to perceive blackspeakers as childish, excessively physical, and intellectually deficient at a non-semantic and preconscious level, blackspeak helped racialize perceptions of Afro-Spaniards, lending ideological support to the slavery-based social *status quo*.

Turning then to the only extant English play resorting to blackspeak, Richard Brome's 1637 *The English Moor, or the Mock-Marriage*, I posit that 1637 London playgoers would probably have understood the novelty that was blackspeak in the light of the existing traditions of foreign European and Irish stage accents. Both sets of associations, I argue, would have turned blackspeak into an auditory comment on the place of black characters (and of the real Afro-Britons they stood for) in the English nation in the audience members' minds. Finally, in the third part of the chapter, I show that studying blackspeak can offer new ways of reading two

important paradigms for early modern studies: the standardization of national languages, and the power of blackface as master trope of racial performances.

2) Blackspeak and the Black Presence

i) In Cities

In 1604, during the traditional Holy Week processions in the streets of Seville, the ancient and powerful confraternity of *Nuestra Señora de la Antigua Siete* accused the *negros'* confraternity of having attacked them in order to enter *El Salvador* church out of turn (Fig.11). They issued a grievance with the archbishop, asking that the black confraternity be dissolved, or, at least, forbidden to participate in the same procession as white confraternities in the future under threat of excommunication. In the memo, preserved today in the archives of the Archidiocese, Francisco de Acosta mentions that "every year [the black] confraternity takes part in the procession of the Holy week, they have quarrels either with the other confraternities of respectable people who march at the same time, or quarrels with people who mock them."[186]

The memo includes several testimonies, one of which, delivered by presbyter Juan de Santiago, gives us more information about the "mockeries" that infuriated the black brothers: "Many people whistled and directed offending sounds at the *negros*, **talking to them in blackspeak**, and embarrassing them without any respect for the procession … And so the *negros* would push back and respond other words, which was very funny and **looked like an *entremés***"[187] (emphasis added). Juan de Santiago's testimony reveals the crucial role of

[186] "*Cada uno de los años que su cofradía sale en la semana santa tienen pendencias unas veces con confradías que concurren aquella noche de gente principal y otras veces con personas que hacen burlas dellos*." Biblioteca Colombina AGAS, Caja 9885, expediente 1.

[187] "*Mucha gente silvaba y hacía otros ruidos afrentosos a los dichos negros, hablándoles en guineo y*

blackspeak in the early modern Spanish racial struggle. The anecdote he recounts shows that the demeaning dimension of blackspeak was transparent to everybody, including Afro-Spaniards, since some Sevillians strategically used that accent in combination with "offending sounds" (probably of the same nature to the scatological sounds emitted by court aristocrats at Juan and his servant in *El valiente negro en Flandes* that we saw in Chapter 2) in order to insult the members of the black confraternity. This move's offensiveness was based on a tacit awareness, shared by all parties involved, that blackspeak was a caricature, an "accent of an accent" distinct from real Afro-Spanish speech forms. And yet, Juan de Santiago's next sentence eerily merges blackspeak and the Afro-Spaniards' real responses, by reading both linguistic entities as part of the same *entremés*. The spectating dynamics of the street procession seem to inform Juan de Santiago's curious deposition: those dynamics of public performance enable a theatricalization of the world in which Afro-Spaniards are by force conflated with their caricatural comedic counterparts. Juan de Santiago's testimony reveals, with a rare straightforwardness, the widespread perception of blackspeak as a technique that came from the world of theatre. It also reveals the centrality of the theatrical paradigm to the mainstream white perception of Afro-Spaniards at the opening of the seventeenth century, and the ensuing capacity of this "funny talk" theatrical technique to affect real Afro-Spaniards' lives in significant ways.

To take the full measure of blackspeak's social energy in Spain, it is important to think of the stage as the center of a nexus of urban performance spaces including churches, private houses, and procession streets through which blackspeak circulated multi-directionally.

Blackspeak was not born a theatrical technique: it became one. Indeed, it entered Spanish

---

affrentándoles en grandes desonor de la procession… de lo cual los negros se corrían y respondían otras palabras… de lo qual parecía cosa de risa y entremés." Ibid.)

culture through music and poetry, and more specifically through Rodrigo de Reynosa's late fifteenth century *coplas* (popular songs), published in Seville as cordel literature meant to be sung to a famous local tune. The *coplas* imagine a call-and-response dialogue between two local slaves. Jorge, whose ethnic origin is "*Gelofe Mandinga"* courts Comba, who is from "*Guinea,"* but in vain, since she already has a better-off lover (presumably white) who has promised to marry her. Blackspeak would never lose the musical coloration of its first instantiations in Spanish: a major public venue where musical blackspeak could be heard was the Church. For instance, the "Christmas Carols and chansonettes that were sung in the choir of the Cathedral of Seville to celebrate the coming of the Holy Kings to Bethlehem when Jesus Christ was a newborn" in 1644 include a carol with two stanzas in blackspeak, one of which goes:

> Brother, we, the #*negros*, #have come
> To #pledge #allegiance to the King,
> *For we are vassals to His law
> Just like the #white #courtiers.
> *We swear that #God is #sacred
> And lovely #Saint Mary
> Is more beautiful than #any rose,
> *And the Child is sovereign.
> Gungulum gua!
> Singing and #dancing
> We have come to adore Him!
> Gungulum gun,
> Gungulum gua! ("Villanzicos" B2v)[188]

In the Church itself—the place, physical and spiritual, that was supposed to effect the integration of black slaves into the Spanish body politic, as we saw in Chapter 2—on the occasion of celebrations that included black people at the symbolical level, the voice of black Christians was

[188] "*Venimo lo neglo, hermano,/ A da oberencia a Reye,/ Que son vassayo de leye,/ Como branco cortezano./ Juran dioso sagaravo,/ Y que sa Maria Hermosa/ Mas beya que brancun roza/ Y lo Niño soberano./ Gnugulum gua./ Cantando y bairando/ Venimo adora,/ Gungulum gun/ Gungulun gua*!" ("Villanzicos" B2v)

distorted into blackspeak, and white church-goers were literally encouraged to join the choir.[189]

This Christmas carol is one among many. Indeed, those *villancico*s with passages in blackspeak were performed on celebration days (Christmas, the Epiphany, Corpus Christi) from the 1630s (at the latest) to the middle of the eighteenth century, first and foremost in the Cathedral of Seville, but also in the other Andalusian cities of Córdoba and Granada that had important black populations, in the cathedral of Toledo, the basilica-cathedral of Zaragoza, and the Royal Chapel in Madrid. The tradition of singing *villancicos* in blackspeak was so popular that it spread throughout the empire, and this musical genre was performed in the cathedrals of Lima, Cuzco, La Paz, Bogotá, Mexico City, Puebla, and Guatemala City (Lipski 90).

Their lyrics were printed on broadsheets, offered to the powerful members of the parish and sold on popular markets (Swiadon 4), ensuring that blackspeak, which must have been in high demand, given the number of broadsheets preserved at the Biblioteca Nacional de España today, would keep circulating, entering people's homes. Those printed *villancicos* in blackspeak perhaps found an even easier access to private houses when they were written by celebrated poets such as Luis de Góngora, who, born in Córdoba, belonged to a slave-owning family, or Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, who owned a *mulata* slave herself.[190] As we shall see shortly, blackspeak was recuperated almost immediately by playwrights who enriched and cultivated this technique sufficiently for Juan de Santiago to think of it as theatrical in 1604.

---

[189] Note that the Cathedral of Seville played a crucial part in the life of Afro-Spaniards: the staircases of the Cathedral were the primary stage slave sellers used to display their slaves and conduct their trade.

[190] See Luis de Góngora's Corpus Christi poem "*En la fiesta del Santísimo sacramento"* (1609), his Christmas poem "*Al nacimiento de cristo nuestro señor*" (1615), his Epiphany poem "*en la fiesta de la adoración de los reyes"* (1615)—all of which mock the participation of Afro-Spaniards in the great Catholic feasts—as well as his sonnet "*A la Jerusalen Conquistada de Lope de Vega"* (1609). For a collection of Góngora's *habla de negros* poems, *see El tema del negro en cantos, bailes y villancicos de los siglos XVI y XVII*, edited by Horacio Jorge Becc. Buenos Aires: Ollantay, 1951. For a complete list of the *villancicos* written by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz during this time period, see Nicholas Jones, "Hyperbolic Hybridities," pp.102-103.

The printing of religious and non-religious *villancicos* lyrics on cheap broadsheets, combined with the spectacular development of the dramatic publishing industry in the early seventeenth century, maximized the circulation of a racializing performance technique that was born nearly a century earlier. Blackspeak, an oral trope by definition, cannot exist outside the realm of performance. To understand what a passage in blackspeak means, the reader often has no choice but to vocalize the lines. Seventeenth century readers, living in a culture where reading was very often an out loud group experience akin to a private performance, were most likely to read the blackspeak texts they owned out loud. By reading (or singing) those texts out loud, readers became simultaneously consumers and producers of blackspeak who could be imitated by their listeners in turn, furthering its circulation. In that sense, blackspeak involved both theatre-goers and theatre-readers as active agents in the racialization of Afro-Spaniards.

ii) In Spain

Blackspeak seems, more often than not, to have fed on real-life proximity between theatre-makers or consumers and early modern Afro-Europeans. In the case of Spanish theatre, blackspeak developed, thrived, and survived exclusively in urban settings whose concentration of Afro-Spanish population sufficed to ensure that theatre-makers and consumers lived and worked within earshot of black people. In the cases of Madrid (where most theatre was produced) and Seville (where most Afro-Spaniards lived), a turn to human geography brings to light hitherto unknown contact zones between Afro-Spanish and theatre communities.

Blackspeak appears in Spanish theatre roughly a decade after it appeared in Portuguese literary culture, in the early 1520s. The fact that the plays by Diego Sánchez de Badajoz and Lope de Rueda, who used blackspeak the most in the sixteenth century, should have been published posthumously (in 1554 and 1567 respectively) makes it hard to pin the exact moment

when blackspeak became popular in Spain, but the flourish of works using blackspeak in the late 1520s and 1530s (by Juan Pastor, Francisco Delicado, Gil Vicente, Feliciano de Silva, and Gaspar Gómez de Toledo) point towards the 1520-1550 decades. Spain had started importing black slaves a century earlier, but if the official recognition of the black confraternity in Seville by the Archidiocese in 1554 is any indication, the black presence in the Peninsula gained momentum in the mid-sixteenth century. Blackspeak developed primarily in the works of playwrights who came from Portugal (Gil Vicente), Andalucía (Lope de Rueda was from Seville, Francisco Delicado from Jaén, and Feliciano de Silva lived in Seville for a while), Extremadura, a commercially and culturally porous region between Spain and Portugal (Diego Sánchez de Badajoz), and cities big enough to resort to a black workforce (Toledo). In other words, those playwrights had all lived in cosmopolitan urban areas, within earshot of Afro-Spaniards.

The real quantitative boom of *habla de negros* plays, however, happens in the first decade of the seventeenth century, with some *entremeses* such as *Los negros* by Simón Aguado (1602), which I will turn to in Chapter 4, or the anonymous *entremés Los negros de Santo Tomé* (1609), mentioned in Chapter 2. But the boom of *habla de negros* was primarily linked to the launch of the *comedia nueva* in the Madrid theatres under the impulse of Lope de Vega, who would use blackspeak more than any other early modern European playwright. This boom coincided with the permanent return of the royal court from Valladolid to Madrid in 1607. Together with its thirst for entertainment, the court brought back an estimated 55,000 persons to the city: aristocrats, administrators, craftsmen, and servants—so many potential patrons for the Madrid *corrales*. The return of the royal court to Madrid fixed the city's dire demographic situation, ensured its ascendency over its bigger Castilian neighbors, and boosted its economy, including its entertainment economy. Doing so, it "increased the proportion of servants, menials,

and marginals" in the city (Calvo Lozano 147), among whom one would inevitably find black slaves, a status symbol particularly cherished by Iberian aristocrats.

Toponymy attests to the visibility of the black presence in early modern Madrid. For instance *calle de las negras* [*negras* street], which still exists today, just below the Lirio palace (see Fig. 12), is reputed to have been called so because there lay a pavilion hosting the black slaves who belonged to Christopher Colombus' grand-children, the dukes of Veragua (Peñasco de la Puente 356). Similarly, *calle de los negros* [*negros* street], which corresponds to the upper segment of today's *calle Tetuan*, just above *Puerta del Sol* (Peñasco de la Puente 528), was called so because there lived the black servants belonging to the president of the Council of the Indies (who, given his charge and the symbolism attached to it, was likely to own one of the largest retinues of black slaves in the city). Not only does toponymy attest to the connection between aristocrats and high officials with black slaves, and to the presence of Afro-Spaniards in some of the most central streets of Madrid, it also reveals a contact zone between the theatre-community specifically and black *madrileños.* Indeed, a close examination of the extant legal documentation on theatre-makers collected by Teresa Ferrer Valls reveals that *calle de los negros* (see Fig. 12) was an important street for the theatre community in Madrid. Between 1601 and 1630, many costume-makers/sellers/renters, musicians, choreographers, and actor families lived and worked there conducted their trade within earshot of black Spanish-speakers.[191]

[191] For instance, Antonio Martínez, a musician, sometime choreographer (he designed the dances of the 1628 Corpus Christi procession in Seville), and costume-maker/seller/renter, married to actress Isabel de Córdoba, had his shop, his home, and possibly a couple of houses in this street. When Martínez and his wife died, their daughters, actresses Sebastiana Martínez and María de Cordoba—known as "Amarillis"—inherited their parents' estate in *calle de los negros* where they had grown up. Sebastiana and her husband, the playwright Luis de Toledo, still lived there in 1631. Another example: Luis de Monzón, a choreographer, costume-maker/seller/renter, sometime actor, and "lessor of the corrales in Madrid," while living on *Plaza Mayor*, conducted business in *calle de los negros*. In 1608, he bought from Ana Muñoz, who lived in the street in question, the stock of theatre costumes she inherited from her late costume-maker/seller/renter husband, Martin Gonzalez; and in 1612, he provided Gabriel Angel, an actor and choreographer, with a place to live on *calle de los negros* so that Angel might look after his costume-renting shop

Contact zones between the theatre community and black communities can be found in Seville too. In particular the choreographers [*maestros de danzas*] who were hired every year by the City council to design the highly popular black dances, which mixed dance, skits, and mime of the Corpus Christi procession, seem to have worked very close to, and possibly with, black Sevillian communities. For instance Hernando Mallén, who designed three black dances [*danzas de negros*] between 1617 and 1625, is characterized in his 1624 contract as "a resident of this city living in the parish of *Santa Maria la Mayor*, close to the gate of the *Arenal*" (see Fig. 11).[192] *Santa María la Mayor* is the cathedral and its parish consequently one of the biggest in the city; however, the precise phrase "close to the gate of the *Arenal*" is meaningful, because the *Arenal,* the port area, was one of the shady suburbs [*arrabales*] of the city. Standing outside of the city's walls, behind a gate that was closed at night, it hosted a very large segment of the black Sevillian population. Even more explicitly, Hernando de Rivera, who designed six black dances (the greatest number of black dances for an choreographer) between 1609 and 1639 (Sentaurens 1292) lived and worked in the parish of *San Esteban* as long as he was active. *San Esteban* is a lovely little church two hundred feet away from the gate of *Carmona*, which separated the city from another one of its colored *arrabales,* equidistant (within a five min walk) between *San Ildefonso* Church—which hosted the *mulatos*' confraternity—and *Nuestra Señora de los Angeles* chapel, which hosted and still hosts the black confraternity [*hermandad de los negritos*] *extra muros*. Living in one of the city's black pockets, Hernando de Rivera worked within earshot of

for him (Ferrer Valls *Diccionario*). Those are just two suggestive examples in a list that goes on and will only get longer as more documents are exhumed.

[192] "*Vecino desta ciudad en la collacion de Santa María la Mayor cerca de la puerta del arenal.*" "Contract between the city council and Hernando Mallén." *Archivo de Contaduría y Junta de Propios*, Sección II, Carpeta 3, documento 77, 1624. Archivo Municipal de Sevilla, Spain.

black Spanish-speakers.[193] Thus, the rise of blackspeak during the first decades of the seventeenth century took place in a culture in which theatre-makers and consumers lived and worked within earshot of Afro-Spaniards.

It is not surprising then that the demographic drop of the black population in Madrid and Seville in the 1640s correlated with a disappearance of black characters in *comedias* on the public stage.[194] Black characters and blackspeak did not disappear completely: they were re-located, as they became a recurrent fixture of *entremeses*, a genre that had particular affinities with court theatre, especially after the completion of the *Coliseo* theatre in the *Buen Retiro* palace compound built by Philip IV.[195] Indeed, performance culture was intense at *Buen Retiro*, and we know of at least one *entremés*, *Las Dueñas*, by Luis Quiñones de Benavente, which was performed "in the basin of El Retiro" in 1645 (see Fig. 12), and starred a real black slave who belonged to actor Andrés de la Vega. This historical anecdote highlights the status of *Buen Retiro* as a place where aristocrats kept consuming black slaves, *entremeses*, and black slaves in

[193] The contracts signed between the city and its *maestros de danzas* make it clear that the guarantors who supported the *maestros* usually belonged to the same parish. The parish network was not only a spiritual but also a professional network for those entertainers. In the case of Hernando de Rivera, there is even reason to wonder whether Rivera himself was a point of contact, belonging to both the theatre and the Afro-Spanish community (see Chapter 4).

[194] Between 1647 and 1652, the great Plague decimated the population of Seville, wreaking particular havoc on the most vulnerable communities, such as the black communities from the *arrabales*. Moreover, the emancipation of Portugal, which regained its independence from Spain in 1640, gave a serious blow to the Iberian slave trade, for Portugal had been the exclusive purveyor of black slaves in Spain for a century and a half under the system of the *asiento*. The interruption of this trade agreement abruptly cut the black slave supplies: the black population that had been decimated in Seville could not be replenished. The situation was comparable in Madrid, where, starting in the 1640s, due to the shortage of black slaves in the dispatch platform that was Seville, black slaves see their number drop and largely taken over by white Muslim slaves (Larquié 57).

[195] María Luisa Lobato notes that *entremeses* and the other short theatre pieces that accompanied *comedia* performances, such as *loas* or *mojigangas*, start being published in collections, separately from *comedia* playtexts in 1640, and that it is "a sociological curiosity" that those collections "have dedications usually directed to members of the aristocracy" (Lobato 292). The aristocrats' taste for and patronage of this theatrical genre was well known.

entremeses after 1640.[196] It is in this little bubble that blackspeak survived in the second half of the century, and the conditions of its survival suggest that, in Spain, Blackspeak thrived when theatre-makers and consumers lived within earshot of black speakers.

iii) In Naples, London, and Paris

One important platform for the dissemination of blackspeak in the late sixteenth century was the city of Naples, where the musical genre of the *moresche* was born and became very popular. The *moresche* was "an offshoot of a genre variously called *canzone villanesca, villotta, villanella* or *napolitana*, all of these describing a secular song in the Neapolitan dialect" (Operstein 1), a genre that was popularized in the 1530s (Rice 3). *Moresche* songs produced the "accent of the accent" of Neapolitan black African slaves, and their birth is attributed to Flemisch-born composer Orlando di Lasso. Just like *habla de negros*, *moresche* blackspeak was long ignored as gibberish, but interested scholars have recently discovered that its lexical imports are largely from Kanuri, the language of the Bornu empire around lake Chad from the end of the fourteenth to the nineteenth century (Rice 3).[197]

This genre was born during Lasso's stay in Naples, a city that, due to its political connections to Spain, had retained the largest black slave population in the country when the total black population in Italy had started decreasing at the end of the fifteenth century.[198]

[196] From the 1640s onwards, the history of the diminishing number of black slaves in Madrid is tightly intertwined with the history of aristocratic circles. Tellingly, between 1650 and 1700, 87% of black slaves who received baptism would belong to aristocrats (Larquié 65). The gorgeous black and white marble busts of African men and women that used to decorate the *Buen Retiro* palace and that are on display at the Prado museum today bear witness to ornamental value placed on real black slaves at Buen Retiro in the seventeenth century.

[197] *Moresche* have recently started receiving attention from music historians. For instance, musicologist and conductor Eric Rice, Head of the Music Department at the University of Connecticut, revived Lasso's Moresche for American ears in Fall 2015 with the Origo Ensemble.

[198] According to Salvatore Bono, in the sixteenth century, black Africans constituted half of the slave population in Sicily (qtd. in McKee 312), and "by the seventeenth century, the two largest populations of slaves were found in Livorno on the Ligurian coast and in Naples" (McKee 321).

Naples' place in the Spanish empire helps account for the spread of blackspeak to Italian regions either by virtue of the cultural exchanges that imperial circulation availed, or by virtue of the role played by the Spanish social model in the persistence and development of black slavery in that Italian region.[199] The fact that Orlando di Lasso created his most famous *moresche* in Germany, where the black presence was significantly less important than in Naples raises interesting questions about the appeal of blackspeak. Indeed, when Orlando di Lasso found a life-long employment at the court of Duke Albrecht V in Munich, and composed *moresch*e for the 1568 wedding of the Duke's son, he imported this Neapolitan musical genre in Bavaria.[200] On the one hand, those *moresche* were performed at court, a performance setting where spectators were much more likely to have been within earshot of Afro-Germans than popular audiences. On the other hand, the blackspeak that was delivered on this occasion, jointly with

---

[199] It is extremely tempting to posit that the *moresche* developed in Naples specifically as a result of strong cultural exchanges with Spain and a familiarity with Spanish blackspeak. In *Spain in Italy*, James Amelang acknowledges that Spain and Italy (and, I would argue, more specifically, Naples) had close cultural exchanges, and yet the history of those exchanges with regard to theatre (among other cultural areas) largely remains to be written (Amelang 455). For now, we will have to be content with clues and hypotheses pointing towards transnational influence. First clue: as we know, Spanish blackspeak had a musical dimension, the Christmas carols tradition, and that tradition travelled throughout the empire to reach South-American cathedrals: it is likely, then, that a composer like Orlando di Lasso would have been familiar with that tradition. Second clue: close-reading one of the *moresche* songs of the *Motets, Madrigals and Moresche* composed by Lasso for the 1568 wedding of Renate of Lorraine to Wilhelm V, called "*Canta, Giorgia*," Natalie Operstein finds strong formal similarities between this song and other *coplas* written by Rodrigo de Reynosa at the end of the fifteenth century (Operstein 14-15). Third, *moresche* were the most theatrical of all Neapolitan *villanesca* songs, being "essentially miniature comic skits" (Cardamone 88) often performed in combination with *commedia dell'arte* skits—as was the case for the 1568 wedding. In other words, the blackspeak of *moresche* songs was conceived of as theatrical in nature. Fourth, according to Donna Cardamone, *moresche* developed through the collaboration of Orlando di Lasso with the Dentice singers, and we know that the Dentice travelled to Spain in 1554 and 1559 (Wistreich 33). Several scholars, including Cardamone, have argued that Lasso is the author of the *moresche* songs published anonymously in 1555 by Rome-based printer Antoine Barré. If that is the case, the Dentice's travel to Spain would have immediately preceded the composition of those blackspeak pieces. In sum, there is a serious probability that the development of blackspeak in Neapolitan culture was transnationally influenced by Spanish blackspeak through various channels.

[200] Then, they were first printed in 1581 in Paris, by music editors Adrien Leroy and Robert Ballard, who were close friends with Lasso, before being reprinted a year later in Antwerp by Pierre Phalèse and Jean Bellère. But nothing is known of any possible performance of those pieces in France or in the Netherlands, as opposed to the documented performance in Munich.

commedia dell'arte skits, was Neapolitan, and as such, did not record the accent that black speakers living within earshot of the German aristocrats might have had in Germanic dialects.

In England, the archives suggest that Richard Brome's representation of black Londoners in the late 1630s, which, as we shall see in the next section of this chapter, relies on the technique of blackspeak, may have been partly informed by some first hand observation of the city's social realities and of the black presence. Matthew Steggle connects the name of the imaginary Blackamoor maid in Brome's play to Imtiaz Habib's finding that several black women living in Britain were actually called Catelina (Steggle 57). Catalina, etymologically "the pure" (i.e. the "whitened" within the symbolical order of the time), seems to have been one of the favorite names for christened black women in Iberia. Spanish *dramatis personae* attest to this, and so does Albrecht Durer's famous 1521 drawing of the black "Katharina," a servant of the Portuguese consul in Antwerp (Kaplan 23).[201] Brome chose a name that conveyed historical realism for his Afro-British servant character. There is also some indication that the play's dedicatee-reader William Seymour (the play's first consumer, since it was written at a time when it could not immediately be performed, during the closure of theatres due to the plague in 1636-1637), had Afro-Britons in his own household.[202] Could Brome have found himself within earshot of those real black servants during one of the visits he paid to his patron? Quite possibly. Matthew Steggle also connects the fact that Quicksands, the imagined owner of black servants,

[201] As examples of Spanish *dramatis personae*, see Catalina, "*la criada negra"* in *El negro de mejor amo* by Antonio Mira de Amescua (1631), or "*la negra Catalina*," the mother of the eponymous hero in *El valiente negro en Flandes*, by Andrés de Claramonte.

[202] A manuscript version of the play, dating back to 1637, before the play was performed, was addressed to William Seymour, marquis of Hertford, one of Brome's most generous aristocratic patrons, whose family had invested in African trading. Imtiaz Habib found a 1673 document showing Seymour's son, John Seymour, fourth Duke of Somerset, entering a deed with "Alice Long (daughter of a blackamoor, Britannia, a daughter of the King of Morocco), making provisions for her descendants" (Habib 215). The deed involves a significant amount of money, which Habib reads as indication that Alice was John Seymour's illegitimate mixed race daughter (Habib 216).

lives in Mark Lane, that is, Market Lane, to Habib's finding that Market Lane was a street popular with successful merchants—the very class that owned black servants in early modern London—and that at least one "John Matthews, a blackmoor lodging in the precinct next to the Tower servant to one Mr. Kellet in Market Lane" was buried in 1614 (Steggle 60).

The black demographic that amounted to 0.5% of London population in the 1590s (Ungerer 20) kept growing in the first half of the seventeenth century, due for the most part to "the development and acceleration of all the overseas trading projects started in the previous period, which, in the African sector, continue to produce enslaved black people in England," and to "the cessation of English hostilities with Spain in 1604, which, while not modifying English perceptions of Iberian black people coming into the country through Anglo-Spanish mercantile networks, facilitated the volume of such importations" (Habib 123). If, as Jean Howard argues, in city comedies, "through their place-based dramatic narratives, playwrights helped representationally to construct the practices associated with specific urban spaces" (J. Howard 3), *The English Moor*, with some degree of historical accuracy, maps out Market Lane as an area associated with black servants, and uses this place to ideologically negotiate the "social tensions" attached to the "urban problem" of the black presence, both real and fantasized, in London.

Early modern French theatre distinguishes itself from its Portuguese, Spanish, Neapolitan, and English counterparts, in that it apparently never attempted to script an African accent.[203] French theatre seems to have remained impervious to blackspeak despite the visit of

[203] French actors may have used an accent in performance in some cases. For instance, Christian Biet suggested to me that the African characters in *Les Portugaiz Infortunez* (see chapter 1), might have spoken with an accent, based on the African king's reaction when he first hears the Portuguese speak: "What is this speech I hear? What is this melodious sound? I want to know what it is: who will tell me?" [*Qu'entenday-je parler? Quel son mélodieux?/ Je veux savoir que c'est: qui me le dira mieux?*] (Des Croix 66) According to Biet, the "melodious" quality of the Portuguese characters' speech was rendered by contrast with a harsh delivery style adopted by actors playing the African characters. Yet, that technique is not scripted in the text.

Orlando di Lasso at Charles IX's court, when he may very well have performed the *moresche* that had been so well received in Munich three years earlier.[204] Despite the fifteen year period (1660-mid-1670s) when Spanish actors, following the marriage of Louis XIV to the Spanish Teresa María of Austria, performed the Spanish theatrical canon regularly at *l'Hôtel de Bourgogne* for a Parisian audience.[205] Despite Molière's seminal mobilization of regional and foreign accents in his attempt at destabilizing the "*grand usage*" pronunciation and introducing a more natural elocutory style in comedies.[206] Despite the fact that the number of black French-speakers boomed after France acquired Saint-Domingue in the 1660s and shifted its Caribbean economy from tobacco culture to the labor-intensive sugar culture. None of these potential vectors of influence seems to have introduced blackspeak into French theatrical culture.

Unfortunately, the absence of reliable demographic data concerning the black population in France prior to the eighteenth century (discussed at length in the Introduction) prevents us, at the moment, from drawing definitive conclusions about the relation between black presence and the development of blackspeak. Generally, the real presence of Afro-diasporic people in a given

[204] Lasso entertained the French king well enough to get an extremely rare personal printing privilege valid in France for ten years, and, in 1574 to be granted a royal pension. The king absolutely loved Lasso's music to the point of trying to steal him from the Bavarian court (Haar 135).

[205] This repertoire, I argue elsewhere, had some influence on French theatre, to the extent that "*barbouillage*," which had disappeared from the French public stage since the late 1610s suddenly re-appears, after a fifty years long interruption, in plays like Boursault's *Le Mort Vivant* (1662), Nicolas Du Perche's *L'Ambassadeur d'Affrique* (1666), and possibly Thomas Corneille's *L'Inconnu* (1675). Blackface disappears again in the early 1680s, so its resurgence seems to coincide with the Spanish actors' presence in Paris. However, this transnational influence in the stagecraft of blackness did not extend to blackspeak: characters in blackface speak unaccented French.

[206] Sabine Chaouche notes that the use of "patois and regional modes of speaking" was instrumental in Molière's attempt at reforming comedic pronunciation (Chaouche 298). The Court defended "the beautiful use of language [*le bel usage de la langue*] popular in *salons*, which was apparently relatively close to twentieth century Québecois pronunciation and valued flow, lightness, and elegance By contrast, the Town, defended "the great use of language" [*le grand usage de la langue*] popular in the public venues of the Parliament, the courthouse, and the playhouse, which apparently sounded like a mouthful, and valued strength, clarity, and over-emphasis. When early modern linguists weighed in on the debate, in the wake of Vaugelas, they typically recommended that French-speakers adapt to the context. Thus, French pronunciation remained unstable and performative until the bourgeois class behind "the Town" imposed its political and linguistic authority over the court in the eighteenth century.

European urban space seems to have been a crucial factor in the development of a local blackspeak, but it was not the only one, and, ultimately, only the release of new historical data concerning the black demographics in France prior to the eighteenth century, combined with a systematic exploration of theatrical and historical archives in other European countries (such as the Netherlands and Germany) will allow scholars over time to develop a more definitive account of the relation between blackspeak and the black presence in early modern Europe.

What can be stated with certainty at this point, however, is that, in areas where blackspeak existed, the proximity between communities of theatre-makers and consumers and communities of Afro-diasporic people kept blackspeak *alive*, in an organic sense. In the Spanish case, for instance, John M. Lipski, María del Carmen Fernández Ortiz, and Antonio Salvador Plans all note that "from the second half of the seventeenth century onwards, we face the gradual decadence of this genre [*habla de negros*], which becomes increasingly stereotypical" (Salvador Plans 776). This evolution leads most linguists and literary scholars to conclude that, in the second half of the seventeenth century—that is, after the spectacular demographic drop of the Afro-Spanish population in the 1640s—playwrights who used blackspeak imitated and caricatured earlier versions of blackspeak, drawing upon a sedimented trope that had little relation to any linguistic reality any longer. In his analysis of laughter's mechanisms, Bergson famously argues that the comic is "the mechanization of the living" [*de la mécanique plaquée sur du vivant*]. In the case of blackspeak, one can read stylized phonetic distortions as the mechanical element forced onto the live entity that was real Afro-Spanish speech. Proximity to real Afro-Spaniards kept the organic component of blackspeak alive: it may not have been the all-encompassing unique root of this performance technique, but once it disappeared, Spanish blackspeak mechanized through and through—it slowly ossified, as linguists have noted.

In other words, there is a grain of truth to any stage accent. That grain is comically grown out of proportions through the caricaturesque mechanisms described by William Labov, but the grain of truth remains. Thus, the frontier between fiction and reality was always porous in blackspeak. It is in virtue of that porosity that during the 1604 Holy Week procession incident in Seville, standers-by could hurl bits of blackspeak at the members of the black confraternity, and that Juan de Santiago could seamlessly put those theatrical insults on the same level as the real Afro-hispanic speech forms which the black brothers used to defend themselves. It is in virtue of that porosity that judgments passed on blackspeak by audience members could carry over and apply to real black hispanophones. It is in virtue of that porosity that the ideological work effected by blackspeak on stage could significantly impact early modern black lives.

3) Blackpeak as a Racializing Device

i) Spanish Theatre: Black Speech, Blackspeak, and the Politics of Humor

Understanding how exactly blackspeak could impact black lives requires an analysis of the ideological work effected by the technique of the accent, and an examination of the politics of humor, for blackspeak's efficiency as a comedic racializing device is in no small measure due to its involvement with one of the most pleasurable human experiences—laughter. Let us take as example *El negro*, an *entremés* by Tirso de Molina published in the *Segunda parte* in 1635, and presumably performed at some point between 1617 and 1635 in Madrid by Juan Bautista Valenciano's acting company. As a close reading will show, in *El negro*, black speech, saturated as it is with physicality, construes black Afro-diasporic people as obsessed with bodily appetites of all sorts (food, sex, dance), while, at a non-semantic, purely phonetic level, blackspeak helps reinforce the audience's perception of those people as supra-physical and infra-intellectual.

The plot goes thus: by a beautiful midsummer night in Madrid, on an idyllic patch of green, a group of white friends is listening to musicians playing and singing a *romance*, a narrative ballad that was popular in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, called "The Pale Wandering Maid" [*Sin color anda la niña*]. A black character, Domingo, enters—illegally, since black slaves were forbidden to leave their or their masters' houses and walk the streets at night in early modern Madrid, and risked severe corporal punishment for doing so. But Domingo is taking a stroll, and he enters the stage, attracted—as early modern Spanish black characters very often are—by the sound of the guitar:[207]

> A #Guitar! The lovely sound!
>
> I don't know what the #devil it is
>
> About this *instrument,
>
> But I love #it:
>
> It #moves my soul.
>
> Here I am listening like a #fool,
>
> Although the sun is rising. (Tirso 284v)[208]

Rapidly, Domingo shows himself determined to prick the white friends' idyllic bubble. He disapproves of this "old" ballad, asks for a more recent and danceable tune, and criticizes its plot from a comically down-to-earth viewpoint. Indeed, for the heroine of the ballad, the abandoned maid who pines away, pales away, and loses sleep and her health over her lover's absence,

---

[207] A similar scene is uncannily depicted, more than a century later, in Francisco Goya's painting "The Blind Guitar Player" (1776), where the viewer's attention is directed to a black water-seller. He stands in the foreground of the painting, arched, still holding his water buckets, fascinated by the music.

[208] "*Guitarriya, a como suena,/ no sè que diabro se tiene/ este modo de instrumenta,/ como li tengo aficion,/ todo en el alma me yeua;/ aqui embosado le escucho,/ aunque el dia me amanesca."* (Tirso 284v)

Domingo—who has no patience for such foolishness—has two pieces of advice: a better diet and a new lover. Domingo interrupts the ballad six times in total, and is ordered to be silent every time he intervenes. After his sixth interruption the friends lose patience:

Argales: Will you be quiet?
Domingo: Yes #sir,
I'll be #quiet like an honorable lady,
Like a nun in the parlor,
Like an eighty year old mother-in-law,
Like a child who gets butt-whipped,
Like a sore loser,
Like your blacksmith #neighbor,
Like a cat and a dog in print,
Like a woman giving birth,
Like a plaintiff who's been played,
Like lowly characters when they get angry
In a bad play.
I swear to #God and on my #conscience,
To be #quiet like those are #quiet.
Argales: Goodness gracious! If you don't
Shut up, may God smash your skull!
Domingo: I wish I could, my good lord,
I #wish #to God a #shoemaker would
Sew my mouth, from side to side,
And my #tongue too!
But, given my #condition, I think that,
Even if he were to sew it,
I *would speak #with my eyes,
My hands, my ears,
My feet, #with my #knee,
My #muscles, #with my legs,
#With my shoulders, and then,
#With the other eye I have left.
Musician: Devil of a *negro*, if you shut up,
We'll have a party for you right here.
Domingo: Fine, I'll be #quiet. With a #condition.
I want to take part in the #party,
Because I *know how to dance too! (Tirso 185v)[209]

[209] "*Argales: Quieres callar?/ Domingo: Si seor,/ cayarè como vna dueña,/ como monja en locutorio,/ como una ochentona suegra,/ como niño si le açotan,/ como quien perdiendo juega,/ como vn herrador vesino,/ como gato, y perro en prensa,/ como una muger de parto,/ como quien trampas pleitea,/ como vulgo si se enoja/ en vna mala comedia;/ de cayar como estos cayan,/ juro an Dioso, y en mi cunciencia./ Argales :Viue Dios, que si no callas,/ que te rompa la cabeça./ Domingo: Non puedo mas, señor mio,/ Plunuiera an Dios, que quisiera/ vn sapatero, a dos*

Domingo compulsively interrupts the *romance* players out of his unwillingness or inability to empathize with the love it celebrates, a love whose truest manifestation consists in the abdication of all bodily pleasures and necessities (such as food, sex, and sleep—and presumably, ultimately, life) on *la niña*'s part. His discourse is fuelled by what spectators would read as a stereotypical obsession of black characters with the body, which prevents him from understanding more refined forms of love. Domingo's enthusiasm for bodily appetites is self-evident when he recommends a healthier lifestyle to the "pale wandering maid" in question:

> Just #ask #God. In order to be well,
> She should eat
> #bacon, #beef, mutton,
> #hen, #partridge, #rabbit,
> #pigeon, #goose, #turkey,
> #chicken and #cocks (not coxcombs),
> #capon, #chorizo,
> #sirloin, #gizzards,
> #salami, #sausage,
> And a whole pan of lard!
> She should also eat #fish:
> #Salmon, #trout, #lamprey,
> Striped tuna, bass, [???],
> Tuna, #fresh sardines,
> Perch, #shad, [???],
> Toad and bowlegged frog,
> Good wine, and good bread …
> And if a lover keeps you awake,
> In every #street you will #find
> A thousand kinds of lovers:
> One with a blond mustache,
> One with a #black #head of hair,
> Another one with a very fat body,
> But #with delicate legs,
> Another one with a beautiful collar,

---

cabos,/ cuserme la boca, y luengua./ Pero de mi cundision/ pienso, que aunque la cusiera,/ que auia de hablar pur ojos,/ pur las manos las orejas,/ pur los pies, pur la rodilla/ pur los muslos, pur las piernas,/ pur las espaldas, y luego/ pur otro ojo que me queda./ Gra.: Negro del diablo, si callas,/ te haremos aqui vna fiesta./ Domingo: Cayarè, con cundision,/ que tengo de entrar en eya,/ que tambien sabo bailar." (Tirso 185v)

Whose Adam's #apple is so #salient
That he could put #glasses on #it
As if it were his #nose;
And another who — [*They interrupt him*]. (Tirso 184v)[210]

Recommending a diet that consists exclusively in meat (with a particular fondness for pork), punning that she should eat "cock but not coxcombs" just before detailing the salient body parts of potential lovers, Domingo offers a solution based on a vision of the carnivalesque body as meat to be consumed in every way. The idea he develops at length in the passage quoted earlier—that, should he be silenced, every part of his body would speak for him—reinforces the inextricable connection between black speech and physicality. His final victory over the *romance* partisans is symbolically celebrated by a merry dance, which consecrates the exulting triumph of the body. Interestingly, some of the images that permeate the scene, whether it be the "butt-whipped" child, or the woman giving birth, or the threat articulated by Argales, "may God smash your skull," reinfuse the *entremés* with a vision of the body that is neither pleasurable nor grotesque: the body in pain, the body that is being whipped, beaten, and torn open, as Domingo's enslaved black body could very well be at any moment in this *entremés*, if he is discovered roaming freely by night by an sheriff.

The cultural obsession with black physicality that fuels Domingo's black speech semantically—a feature that permeates the black canon at large—is also central to the comic mechanisms of blackspeak. Indeed, blackspeak can be productively analyzed in the light of the ideas developed in what is commonly known as the Superiority Theory of laughter, and more

[210] "*Comiera, plegueten Dioso,/ para poder estar buena,/ tuzino, baca, carnero,/ ganyina, periz, coneja,/ palonmino, ganso, pambo,/ poyos, y poyas sin cresta;/ capun de leche, churiso,/ solomiyo, y su moyeja,/ salchichone, longanisa,/ y cubilete de peya./ Comiera tambien pescaro,/ salmone, truncha, lamprea,/ bonito, robalo, lancha,/ atun, saldinitan fresca,/ mero sabanlo, assedia,/ sapo, y ranan patiambierta:/ buen vino, buen pan … / Si vn amante te desvela,/ a cada essequina ayaràs/ amantes de mil maneras,/ vno lo vigote rubio,/ y la cabenyera nergra:/ otro muy gordo de cuerpo,/ muy delgadito den pierna,/ otro, que con la valona,/ tanta nues echa den fuera,/ que como a narise, puede/ poner antojos en eya:/ otro, que"* (Tirso 184v)

specifically, Freud's ideas in *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*.[211] A source of the comic, Freud argues, is the moment when we deem that someone has taken "too much trouble" to perform a physical function, or "too little trouble" to perform a mental/intellectual function:

> A person appears comic to us if, in comparison with ourselves, he makes too great an expenditure on his bodily functions and too little on his mental ones; and it cannot be denied that in both these cases our laughter expresses a pleasurable sense of the superiority which we feel in relation to him. (Freud 194)

Phonetic distortions could easily be understood by audience members as excesses of expenditure, or effort, spent on a defective elocution. Indeed, it would have been hard not to notice the surplus of labor performed by the blackspeakers' jaws, lips, and tongues, by contrast with unaccented speakers. Grimacing contemporary instances of blackspeak in standup comedy offer a good point of comparison: there is little doubt that audience members derive a large part of their pleasure from this labor, which less-than-race-conscious performers tend to exaggerate, alternatively thrusting their lips forwards and discovering as many teeth as possible. In this scene from *El negro*, for instance, Domingo's accent consists quite importantly in the addition of [u] sounds, either in replacement of an [o] or as an epenthetic addition: a sound that most certainly allowed actors to do some comic mouth-work.

For any Caucasian audience member sharing the opinion casually articulated by George Puttenham, that one of the "fit instruments man hath by nature" to the purpose of speaking is

[211] The partisans of the Superiority Theory of laughter, from Aristotle's *Poetics*, Cicero's *de Oratore*, Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* to, among other early modern philosophers and physicians, Laurent Joubert's *Traité du ris* (1579), state that laughter is provoked by the perception of some "deformity," physical or moral, at which we joyously express our scorn, for it makes us feel superior to the subject afflicted by this deformity. What Bergson identifies as distortedly "mechanical" in a "living" element in *Laughter* (1900) is a modern rendition of this idea of "deformity." While those authors, especially Bergson, typically found their observations upon visual examples, stage accents constitute risible "deformities" in the auditory realm, and can be productively analysed in that light.

"thin and movable lips" (Puttenham 228, emphasis added), the fuller lips of Afro-diasporic people must have appeared to be an obstacle to easy elocution. In 1558, theologian Johannes Bremer von Hagen's treatise on chiromancy and physiognomy was translated and published in English. In it, he wrote that "great lips" are a sign of "dull and foolish people, hard of understanding, unclean, luxurious, inconstant, and cruel" (qtd. in Loomba and Burton 25). That book had nine re-editions in England between 1558 and 1683. Analyzing the definition and etymology of the word *bozal* which comes from *boca* [the mouth], in Covarrubias 1611 Castilian dictionary, Nicholas Jones confirms the existence of "Spain's cultural and somatic fixation on big African lips."[212] This fixation informs theatrical representations of Afro-diasporic people's elocutory challenges. It is likely then that listeners laughed at *how much work* it took black mouths to pronounce simple words—and they couldn't even do it correctly. That cultural fixation on African lips certainly informed the presence of the built-in thick lips in the masks used during the 1525 *danza de negros* in Toledo (see Chapter 2). In that sense, blackspeak derived some of its comic force from the clumsy surplus of physical labor that its production necessitated from the black fictional character.[213] The flipside of this clumsy surplus of labor, being, of course, the virtuosic surplus of labor it demands from the white performer.

Parallel to their excessive expenditure on physical elocutory functions, blackspeakers

[212] "*Bozal"* was the term used to refer to slaves who had recently arrived from Africa and did not master Spanish yet; *ladino* is the antonym, referring to anyone who had been hispanized, and in this context, slaves who spoke unaccented Castilian.

[213] The physical labor in question on the black characters' part was not associated with desire and sexuality per se, but the obsession of black speech with the body often intersected with the comic physicality of blackspeak when phonetic distortions created sexual puns. For instance, one pun circulates among several texts in blackspeak: the distortion of the word "*corazón"* (heart) into "*culazón* (a voluptuous behind). In Simón Aguado's 1602 *entremés de los negros*, Dominga declares to her future husband Gaspar how much she loves him, "*como a la tela del culazón*": she means "like the fabric of my heart," but, by virtue of blackspeak, audience members hear "like the fabric of my bootilicious behind" (Aguado, "los negros" 232). In his rewriting of Tirso de Molina's *El negro*, Luis Quiñones de Benavente made sure to alter the first line delivered by his black protagonist in order to place that same pun into his mouth (see footnote #219).

also invited laughter with their insufficient expenditure on intellectual functions. The latter often makes an adult resemble a child, and, not surprisingly, Freud argues later on that we laugh most often when, at a preconscious level, we find the object of our laughter to remind us of a child.[214] The idea that laughter arises when we recognize an "infantile" element in someone does shed some light on the comic nature of blackspeak. Indeed, Paul Teyssier uses the phrase "childish syntax" to characterize Portuguese blackspeak (Teyssier 229), and the infantile dimension of blackspeak manifests through various acts of simplification. In the scene above from *El negro*, simplification operates phonetically in Domingo's systematic "*yeismo*" or delateralization (his decision to ignore the phonetic distinction between [ll] as a [y])—a feature that characterized real-life accents in the region of Andalusia where the majority of early modern Afro-Spaniards lived and learned Castilian. A drive towards simplification also manifests in the wonderful neologistic form "*sabo*" [I know], a made-up regular form for the highly irregular verb *saber,* which imitates the conjugation logic followed by children and language learners.[215] That Domingo's accent should affect and undermine the moment when he claims some kind of *knowledge* is of course no coincidence, and miniaturizes the ideological work of blackspeak.

[214] "The comic of movement and form, of mental functioning and of character" is triggered by the fleeting evocation of a child's "inferior mental and moral development" (Freud 225), and similarly, "the comic of situation is mostly based on embarrassments, in which we rediscover the child's helplessness. The worst of the embarrassments, the interference by the peremptory demands of natural needs with other functions, corresponds to the child's incomplete control over his bodily functions. Where the comic of situation operates by means of repetitions, it is based on the child's peculiar pleasure in constant repetition (of questions or of being told stories), which make him a nuisance to the adult. Exaggeration, which still gives pleasure to adults in so far as it can find justification with their critical faculty, is connected with the child's peculiar lack of a sense of proportion, his ignorance of all quantitative relations, which he comes to know later than qualitative ones." (Freud 225)

[215] Among the most common and noticeable gestures of grammatical simplification in Spanish blackspeak in the black canon, we can mention inattention to proper conjugation (using plural verbal forms with singular subjects and disregarding tense variations), disregard for gender agreement (between nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and determinants), and carefree coinage of useful forms (such as the neologistic verb *sar* [to be], which to eschews the difficulty of juggling "*ser"* and *"estar,"* with which anyone who has tried to learn Spanish is painfully familiar).

This construction of Domingo as excessively physical and intellectually deficient or childish at the phonetic level, complements his stereotypical construction as a character driven by physical pleasures at the semantic level. This double construction associating stage *negros* with excessive physicality provided ideological support to the various forms of physical exploitations to which Afro-diasporic people were subjected, while their association with deficient intellect and childishness conveniently reinforced the idea that white Spaniards had a moral mandate to educate them, to "force the black man out of the spiritual Africa in which he lives" (Fra-Molinero, *Imagen* 8). That "spiritual Africa" is to be understood as a state of savagery, or spiritual and cultural misery that could only be corrected by the Europeanization of Africans, enforced through the social practices of a slavery-based Catholic society. Providing support to an ideology that positioned black Afro-diasporic people at the bottom of the social order based on essentialized qualities, blackspeak fully participated in the trend of racialization at work in early modern performance culture at large.

One might object, rightfully so, that few people went to the theatre with a clear purpose of defending the institution of slavery with their mighty laughter. And yet, laughter theorists assure us: little does it matter whether audience members consciously or deliberately participate in such exercises of power, or whether there might be some degree of variation on an individual basis (and of course there is), for audience members do not need to be aware of it for the comic accent to perform its ideological work. On the contrary, Bergson explains, laughter pursues its goals "unconsciously, and even immorally in many individual instances" (Bergson 16). Freud develops and refines this idea when he argues that the cognitive processes conducive to the emission of laughter must remain "automatic":

> The comic process will not bear being hypercathected by attention; it must be able to take its course quite unobserved . . . It would, however, contradict the nomenclature of the "processes of consciousness" of which I made use, with good reason, in my *Interpretation of Dreams,* if one sought to speak of the comic process as a necessarily unconscious one. It forms part, rather, of the pre-conscious; and such processes, which run their course in the preconscious but lack the cathexis of attention with which consciousness is linked, may aptly be given the name of "automatic." The process of comparing expenditures must remain automatic if it is to produce comic pleasure. (Freud 249)

In other words, the less aware audience members are of their own cognitive processes and of the racializing power dynamics at play, the louder they will laugh at blackspeak. In that sense, the ideological work performed by the technique of blackspeak operates "unobserved."

The strength of blackspeak as an ideological tool operating at the "preconscious," or "automatic" level to protect the economic foundations of Spanish society helps us understand a paradox. Indeed, one intriguing dimension of blackspeak is that, while it primarily relies on corrective responses and impulses, the correction cannot, must not, ever be fully carried out. If blackspeak were to disappear—that is, if black characters were to speak in unaccented Castilian (as was the case for many real seventeenth century Afro-Spaniards, according to John Lipski), the stage would lose one of its finest racializing ideological tools. We get a glimpse of the importance of the persistence of blackspeak, uncorrected and unamended, on stage in *El negro*. Domingo emphatically does not shut up, and he has the last word, delivering the final line of the *entremés*: "I cannot shut up, I swear to #God, as hard as I try!" [*No puedo callar, juro an Christo, por mas que hago*] (Tirso 285v). Domingo repeats several times, that he desperately wants to shut up but is unable to: he describes his own talkativeness as a medical "condition," but this condition can also read as a form of violence—yet another one—visited upon him by the mainstream comic dramaturgy of blackness. This dimension must have struck playwright Luis Quiñones de Benavente, the master of seventeenth century *entremes*, when he rewrote Tirso's

skit in the early 1660s: in his version, Domingo speaks even more, his speech forms are even more heavily accented, and he receives the eloquent nickname of "the talkative little *negro"* [*el negrito hablador*].[216] It would be tempting to read this persistence of black voices as an act of affirmation and a statement of resilience, but I am more inclined to think that the persistence of blackspeak, with all its linguistic distortions, fulfills the needs of the pro-slavery ideology it is part of. This ideology needs talkative blackspeakers to keep chatting for black characters to keep racializing themselves without end. This ideology needs blackspeak for black characters to remain perpetually in need of correction, education, and exploitation.

This is particularly visible in another anonymous late seventeenth century *entremés* called *La negra lectora* [The Reading *negra*]. Three young clerks in search of entertainment decide to play a trick on Dominguilla, a black cook notorious in the city for her delicious tripe stew, and a hard worker, who takes evening lessons in order to improve her Spanish and lose her accent. Although such an initiative should be praised in a society that values linguistic mastery and *ladino* identity over *bozal* identity for *negros,* the young white men frame their trick as a punishment for Dominguilla's ambitions. One of their final stanzas unambiguously states:

> Who is encouraging #*negras*
>
> To become so learned?
>
> Cookbooks

[216] Luis Quiñones de Benavente wrote an extended version of Tirso de Molina's *El negro* called *El negrito hablador*. It was published in 1664, in a collection of *autos* and short plays performed at court. Although, given the time elapsed between an *entremés* performance and its publication, Quiñones de Benavente's *entremés* was probably performed in the 1630s rather than in the 1660s, the fact that his version is longer than Tirso's, uses more specific indications (of location, and dance names, for instance) than Tirso's, and that his nameless *negro* character is much more stylized than Tirso's, suggest together that it was Quiñones de Benavente who reworked Tirso's *entremés*, not the reverse.

Are what they should study! ("negra lectora" 175)[217]

Here is how they describe Dominguilla's crime and punishment:

People say that this little *morena*
Is learning how to read and write
With Manuel Perez Botijon,
The schoolmaster:
When the children go home,
He gives her classes,
Makes her read short letters.
Since she is a *negra* and a *bozal* one,
With our wits, we can trick her
Very easily,
Whether she wants it or not.
First, we'll bring her the schoolteacher
Who is indoctrinating her
For him to give her a lesson,
And teach her our language.
And, then, when she is distracted,
We will steal her tripe stew
From that bitch!
And then, the three of us will
Seize our guitars
And treat her with proverbs:
We'll joke about the prank we played on her
And tell her some proverbs
That she can neither say
Nor pronounce correctly! ("negra lectora" 168-169)[218]

The three valiant lads perceive Dominguilla's desire to fix her accent and to learn to how to read and write Spanish (a desire in keeping with the official dictates of white ideology) as an uppity transgression. Her transgression had to do with linguistic mastery, so does her punishment:

[217] "*Quien les mete a las neglas/ Ser tan sabidas?/ Estudien solo en libros/ De las cocinas."* ("negra lectora" 175)

[218] "*Dizen que esta Morenilla/ A leer, y a escribir la enfeña/ Manuel Perez Botijon,/ Esse Maestro de escuela,/ Y en faliendo los muchachos/ Le viene a dar a la Negra/ Leccion en vna cartilla;/ Y como es Negra bozal,/ Podrà nueftra diligencia/ Engañarla fácilmente,/ Que ella quiera, ò que no quiera;/ Llevaremosle el Maestro,/ Que la adoctrina , y enseña/ Para que le de leccion/ Y le enseñe nuestra lengua;/ Y quando ella entretenida/ Estè en su entretenimiento/ El menudillo, y los callos/ Quitaremos a la perra,/ Y luego los tres saldrèmos/ Cada vno con su vihuela,/ A celebrarle los dichos,/ Y hazer burla de la treta,/ diziendole algunos dichos/ Que ella dezirlos no pueda,/ Ni pronunciar."* ("negra lectora"168-169)

throwing proverbs at her, they weaponize the parts of language where national culture is most sedimented. The *dénouement* replaces this fantasized scene of punishment with an accent-based scene of linguistic humiliation, in which both the schoolmaster and the three clerks (when they are not busy eating Dominguilla's tripe stew) mock her pronunciation of the alphabet. The pleasure they take in her phonetic failures is only equal to their displeasure when she succeeds:

> Teacher: H.
> *Negra*: Ache.
> Teacher: No. H.
> *Negra (Making a big effort to pronounce the letter correctly):* H.
> *At this point, the three lads sneeze loudly, saying "Achoo!" instead of "H," with much Noise and mirth. The teacher does the same, with his spectacles on.*
> Francisco: Yeah! Look how #well she can read
> The black #strumpet #sister! ("negra lectora" 172-173)[219]

She manages to pronounce a sound correctly, and the figures of authority still bring her back to blackspeak. Dominguilla cannot win, for she inhabits a linguistic space where she must keep making the very mistakes that justify her oppression and the oppression of her off stage counterparts: she must keep on being read through the very lenses of childishness, excessive physicality, and deficient intellect. In that sense, the three young clerks and the teacher embody the oppressive force wielded against stage *negros* by the comic dramaturgy of blackness itself.

ii) English Theatre: Foreigners, Conquest, and Racial Degeneration

In 1636-1637, Caroline playwright Richard Brome wrote a city comedy called *The English Moor, or the Mock-Marriage*, which would be performed at Salisbury Court by Queen Henrietta's Men in 1637, and published some twenty years later. This is the only extant early

[219] "*Maestro: H/ Negra: Cache./ Maestro: H./ Negra (haziendo fuerza/ para pronunciar la letra): H./ Ahora todos tres de dar grandes estornudos,/ Diziendo guachi en lugar de ache, con grande/ Fiesta y bulla, y el Maestro tambien con ellos/ Hará lo mismo, puesto enteojos./ Francisco: Ay, que bona lectora,/ Esta la plima beyaca mandingola!"*("negra lectora" 172-173)

modern English play to use the performance technique of blackspeak. This linguistic hapax (in the current state of the archive) has received virtually no critical attention aside from Virginia Mason Vaughan's brief mention of "a burlesque of African dialects" (V. Vaughan 119).[220] A comparative approach, however, yielding a larger corpus, gives a new significance to this hapax. In this section, I will not analyze the comic mechanisms of English blackspeak, as the analysis of the politics of humor that I just conducted with Spanish examples, by virtue of their focus on linguistic distortion itself, obtains across linguistic borders. I will focus instead on the kind of added ideological value that blackspeak could have on the English stage.

When it comes to black Afro-diasporic people, in the 1630s, the social status quo was less clearly defined in England than in Spain: slavery was not an entrenched practice just yet, and Afro-Britons lived in a legally grey zone, as Imtiaz Habib has shown (see Chapter 1). So the ideological work effected by blackspeak in Brome's play is to be understood less as part of a discourse of justification for ongoing social institutions and practices, than as taking part in the shaping of a slowly coalescing racial discourse. In this section, I try to reconstruct the effect that hearing this blackspeak could have on a 1637 London playgoer used to other traditions of stage accents, namely the tradition of foreign European accents, and the tradition of the Irish accent. Considering those two non-mutually exclusive interpretive routes, I try and understand how associating Afro-British characters with European foreigners and with the Irish could inflect the perception of those characters by the audience and racialize them.

[220] The play has received critical attention over the last twenty years mostly for the emphasis it puts on the material conditions of blackface production (V. Vaughan 117-118), for its masterful use of the racial rhetoric of English masques (K. Hall, *Darkness* 166-175), and, most recently, for its distinct focus on the black presence in the domestic space of the city of London (Matthew Steggle).

Compared to Iberia, blackspeak appears late in English theatrical culture.[221] This is due for a large part to the fact that blackspeak is an inherently comedic technique, while black characters in early modern English drama had overwhelmingly appeared in tragedies until then (probably because of the tragic understanding of blackness as an indelible moral stain that characterizes Protestant cultures, in addition to a nationally defined esthetic sensibility). In Brome's city comedy *The English Moor,* blackspeak could deploy its comic effects.[222]

While it would be tempting to think that Brome experimented with blackspeak as a result of transnational theatrical exchanges, at this point, no biographical evidence has been found to prove or disprove the hypothesis of Richard Brome's familiarity with Iberian performance culture or with Spanish playtexts scripting blackspeak.[223] What is obvious from his dramatic output, though, is Brome's affection for accents generally. All kinds of stage accents: regional, foreign, and social. In *The Northern Lass* (1629), Brome experiments with regional accents by having Constance speak with a sturdy Yorkshire accent; in *The Demoiselle* (1632), Brome experiments with foreign accents, by having Brookall speak with a thick French accent; in *A Jovial Crew, or the Merry Beggars* (1652), Brome experiments with social accents, by staging

[221] As we saw in Chapter 1, this does not mean that English theatre did not concern itself with the issue of a black presence in London before the 1630s. The question of whether black Afro-diasporic people could be woven into the English social fabric was already anxiously articulated in theatrical terms in the early 1590s, with *Titus Andronicus.*

[222] In fairness, a comedic setting is a condition necessary but not sufficient for blackspeak to be used. Indeed, twenty years earlier, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Monsieur Thomas* (1617), a comedy set in England, a Blackamoor maid was used in a bedtrick scene. Interestingly, she was called "Kate", sharing her name with Brome's "Catelina" (here again, we encounter the "Catalina" surname that was so popular for black women across early modern Europe). Beaumont and Fletcher's comic Kate speaks few lines, but she speaks enough for us to notice that she has no accent.

[223] Note, however, that Brome seems to have been receptive to French cultural influence. Indeed, his reactivation of the Heliodoric motif in the embedded masque of the *English Moor*, for all it might owe to Ben Jonson's *Masque of Blacknesse*, happens at the very time (late 1630s) when the French craze for Heliodorus' *Aethiopica* on stage and in visual culture had become important enough to influence the work of other European artists, such as the Flemish artist Abraham van Diepenbeeck or the Spanish playwright Pérez de Montalbán. I develop this reflection on Brome's participation in a transnational Heliodoric Renaissance at length in "'Everyone Breeds in His Own Image': Staging the *Aethiopica* across the Channel." *Renaissance Drama,* vol. 44, no. 2, 2016, pp. 157-185.

some of the most extensive scenes of canting in the repertoire. Those are only a few examples. Blackspeak, the "accent of the accent" of early modern Afro-Britons who, as Imtiaz Habib shows, usually fell somewhere on the spectrum of unfreedom, is at the intersection of foreign and social accents, and this complexity probably appealed to Brome. Brome's city comedies welcome all the strange sounds and voices of London's streets into the playhouse.

Let us first review the two blackspeak scenes of the play. *The English Moor, or the Mock-Marriage* focuses on the marriage of Quicksands, an old Jewish usurer who does commerce with Barbary and lived in Venice at some point in his life, to the smart, virtuous, and beautiful Millicent, as well as the latter's successful endeavors to eschew such a horrid husband. Quicksands is concerned, and rightly so, that all the young men he has ruined in London might avenge their own wrongs by cuckolding him: to avoid such a scenario, he disguises Millicent as a Blackamoor maid called "Catelina," assuming that no Englishman could possibly be drawn to a black woman. But his assumptions fall flat on Nathaniel Banelass, a rake who has undone many a woman before:

Nathaniel: It is the handsom'st Rogue
I have ere seen yet of a deed of darkness;
Tawney and russet faces I have dealt with,
But never came so deep in blackness yet
. . . . . .
He keeps this rye-loaf for his own white tooth
With confidence none will cheat him of a bit;
Ile have a sliver though I loose my whittle
. . . . . .
Hist, Negro, hist.
Millicent: No fee, O no, I darea notta.
Nathaniel: Why, why—-pish—-pox I love thee,
Millicent: O no de fine white Zentilmanna
Cannot a love a the black a thing a.
Nathaniel: Cadzooks the best of all wench.
Millicent: O take—-a heed—-a my mastra see—-a.
Nathaniel: When we are alone, then wilt thou.

Millicent: Then I shall speak a more a.
Nathaniel: And Ile not lose the Moor-a for more then I
Will speak-a. (4.4.717-731)

A month later, to celebrate his imagined victory over the young men who would cuckold him and who now believe that Millicent is dead, Quicksands organizes a private masque to which he invites his enemies: based on a mock-version of Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*, the masque is meant to reveal who the Blackamoor maid really was all this time. He does not know that Millicent has traded place with her own maid, Phillis, who was once undone by Banelass. Neither does Banelass when he uses the masque to make advances on Catelina/Phillis:

Nathaniel: Musick, play a Galliard,

You know what you promised me, Bullis.

Phillis: But howa can ita be donea.

Nathaniel: How I am taken with the elevation of her nostrils.

Play a little quicker—-Heark you—-if I lead you

A dance to a couch or a bed side, will you follow me?

Phillis: I will doa my besta. (4.5.808-811)

Banelass and Catelina/Phillis are caught red-handed: a trial scene—reminiscent, here again, of the *dénouement* of the *Aethiopica*—ensues, in which true identities are revealed, Quicksands is tricked into divorcing Millicent, and Banelass is tricked into marrying Phillis.

Blackspeak is passed on from Millicent to Phillis just like blackface: as a disguise component that masks her identity and makes the two women interchangeable as they work together. In Brome's play, blackspeak is characterized by very little grammatical distortion (Catelina uses fairly elaborate grammatical constructions, and only one conjugation mistake: "my master see"), but significant phonetic distortions. Those consist mostly in the repetition of

epenthetic [a], a transformation of [ð] (a typically English sound notoriously hard to pronounce for non-native speakers) into [z], of [dʒ] into [z], and "master" into "mastra" —a transformation evocative of future "massa" developments.

To an English ear, Catelina's accent could have been reminiscent of various traditional stage accents. Her Spanish name, suggests that, like most Afro-Britons at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the imaginary black maid Catelina was either born in Iberia or had spent time in Iberian cultures prior to coming to England. Logically, one would expect Catelina's blackspeak to smack of Spanishness (like Spanish blackspeak often smacks of Portugueseness), and thus draw on a given tradition of Spanish stage accent. There lies the rub: while there is a strong tradition of scripted French, Italian, Dutch accents in early modern English drama, there is no equivalent for Spanish or Portuguese accents. They may have been used by individual actors, but they are not scripted in playtexts as an established practice informing playwrights' dramaturgies. The numerous Spanish characters of English drama either speak Castilian—maybe Castilian with a English accent depending on the actor's proficiency—(as is the case in Thomas Dekker's *Old Fortunatus* and Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist*), or they simply weave a couple of common Spanish words into their perfectly unaccented English (as is the case for Don Armado in *Love's Labor's Lost*, and in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Love's Pilgrimage*). Having no well-established model of stage Spanish accent to imitate, Brome seems to have translated Spanish blackspeak into English by borrowing some features from the traditional French stage accent: Catelina's "fee!" interjection, supposed to render the French defiant "*fi*!" according to Matthew Steggle's gloss, is also used as interjection in *The Demoiselle*. Her pronouncing the definite article [de] is a feature used by the French in *The Damoiselle*, but also by the Dutch in *Englishmen for my money*, or *The Shoemaker's Holiday*.

But Catelina's accent also draws on West country regional English accents: "zentilmanna" is strongly reminiscent of the [z] words used by Edgar in *King Lear* when he counterfeits a peasant accent. However, the epenthetic [a] that struck Banelass in Catalina's mouth seems to be Brome's own invention for blackspeak. In short, to make some blackspeak, Brome used something foreign, something English, and something new.[224] This motley of associations is meaningful. Drawing on the French and Dutch accents, Brome's blackspeak associates Catelina with many of the Europeans that were involved in Atlantic slave trade (other than the Iberians who christened her) in the minds of audience members. And drawing on a rustic regional English accent, blackspeak associates her with a lowly social positioning within a traditionally English social geography. In other words, understood in relation to the tradition of foreign European stage accents, blackspeak gives Catalina a double set of coordinates that positions her and the Afro-Britons she stands for as simultaneously outside and inside of the English nation.

Another important traditional stage accent with which 1637 audience members might have associated Catelina's blackspeak bits is the Irish accent, given the thirty-year old English tradition of staging comic accents from the British Isles (Welsh, Scottish, and, most importantly, Irish). Those scripted Celtic accents, it must be noted, bear no formal resemblance to Catelina's blackspeak, and yet, as Ania Loomba and Jonathan Burton note, Gaelic and African languages were sometimes conflated in early modern English discourse (Loomba and Burton 21). The traveller Sir Thomas Herbert, for instance, writes about the Anzigues of Southwestern Africa,

[224] Pam Brown suggested to me that the epenthetic "a" might be evocative of an Italian accent. I find the Italian accent scripted in *Englishmen for my Money* to be quite different, but even if a 1637 audience member were to associate Catelina's accent with a stage Italian accent, such an association would not defeat the interpretive framework presented here, since parts of Italy, such as Naples, were heavily involved in the slave trade.

whom he calls Troglodites: "Their words are sounded rather like that of apes than men . . . Their pronunciation is like the Irish" (qtd. in Loomba and Burton 227). Sir Herbert's seamless conflation of widely different languages and pronunciations signals that there was an auditory association between the Irish and Africans in English ears, and that this association had more to do with ideology that with actual phonetic resemblances (which were virtually irrelevant).

Celtic stage accents derived their comic force from the same mechanisms as Spanish blackspeak, portraying Celticspeakers as childish, intellectually deficient, and excessively physical in plays such as *The Famous History of the Life and Death of Captain Thomas Stukeley* (1605), *Henry V* (1605), and Ben Jonson's *Irish Masque at Court* (1613).[225] But, unlike foreign European stage accents such as the French, the Dutch, or the Italian, this comic tradition of Gaelic accentual notation has been read as "ludicrous caricatures" participating in "the colonizers typology" (Baker, "Wildehirissheman" 45) and strongly informed by dynamics of conquest and racialization. Thus, by integrating a new population group, Afro-Britons, into that tradition, Brome recuperated its power dynamics, extended it to blackspeak, and commented indirectly on the place of Afro-Britons in the nation.

Early modern European political thinking consecrated the importance of linguistic unity for any nation with imperial aspirations (Blank 126; Neill 15). In Britain, efforts to promote and impose the King's English as linguistic standard—in which writers and especially playwrights were instrumental—correlated with efforts to suppress Welsh, Scottish, and Irish languages from

[225] In his description of the comic "accentual notations" of Welsh, Scottish, and Irish identities in *Henry V,* Stephen Greenblatt too uses—deliberately or not—the Bergsonian language of mechanicity to account for the comic of the Celtic accents. "Their distinctness is curiously formal, a collection of **mechanistic** attributes…The verbal tics of such characters interest us because they represent not what is alien but what is predictable and **automatic**. They give pleasure because they persuade an audience of its own mobility and complexity; even a spectator gaping passively at the play's sights and manipulated by its rhetoric is freer than these **puppets jerked on the strings** of their absurd accents." (Greenblatt 57 emphasis added)

the political and legal spheres, as the gradual annexation of those territories unfolded. Paula Blank reads the appearance of Welsh, Scottish and Irish accents on stage (distinct from regional English accents, which are older) around 1603 as directly connected to the growing linguistic and political imperialism of the English crown in those regions.[226]

By directing this performance trope at Afro-Britons, Richard Brome underlined the role of Africa in "the rise in English travel and trade and the consequent emergence of England as a naval power" fit to serve imperial projects (K. Hall, *Darkness* 16). The fact, pointed out by Kim F. Hall, that the Anglo-African trade was always characterized, as early as the mid-sixteenth century, by English attempts at breaking the Iberian monopoly on slave trafficking (K. Hall, *Darkness* 19) places black bodies within the proto-colonial sphere of English concerns. Brome's re-directing the imperialist linguistic dynamics of British accents towards Afro-diasporic people via blackspeak spoke to this positioning of black bodies, and transferred onto black characters a relational mode predicated on fantasies of conquest. Indeed, in the two blackspeak scenes of *The English Moor*, it is not a coincidence that the only character who listens and responds to Catelina's blackspeak moments, Banelass, should be aggressively and successfully trying to conquer Catelina's black body. In those two scenes, sexual and colonial conquest overlap (as they do in virtually any modern text addressing colonization), and the gendering of the black character enhances the political dimension of the new British accent that was blackspeak.

Moreover, the performance trope of the Irish accent involved fantasies of racial

[226] On the development of the New English discourse on Irish difference, see David Baker. *Between Nations: Shakespeare, Spenser, Marvell, and the Question of Britain.* Stanford University Press, 1997. For a detailed study of primary sources evidencing an obsession with the idea of racial degeneration and advocating for the destruction of Irish culture and language, see Michael Neill. "Broken English and Broken Irish: Nation, Language, and the Optic of Power in Shakespeare's Histories." *Shakespeare Quarterly*, vol. 25, no.1, 1994, pp. 1-32. On the ambivalent effect of hearing the stage Irish accent on English spectators, see Paula Blank. *Broken English: Dialects and the Politics of Language in Renaissance Writings*. London; New York: Routledge, 1996. On the use of dialectal stereotypes on the English stage, see Erin Reynolds. "Strange Accents or Ill Shapen Sounds: Dialect in Early Modern Drama." 2008.

degeneration, which Brome also recuperated and directed at Afro-Britons via blackspeak. Indeed, the sustained Anglicizing attempts at suppressing the use of Gaelic in Ireland, were, according to Paula Blank, fuelled by anxieties not so much about Irish cultural resistance as about a possible "Gaelicization of the English" who lived in "Dublin and to two rural provinces, the baronies of Forth and Bargy in County Wexford, and to Fingall, a region north of Dublin" (Blank 144-145). It was their accent that was paraded on stage as "Irish." Spenser's *A View of the Present State of Ireland* (1596) most transparently reads questions of language politics in racial terms by articulating "the notion that speaking Irish had adulterated the lifeblood of the English stock" (Blank 147). In late sixteenth century perceptions, race was still a flexible concept, that is, the nature of human beings was not understood as fixed but as in flux and susceptible to change. Thus, according to Spenser, for English people to intermarry with Irish people and to let their children suckle Gaelic-speaking-and-teaching nurses entailed severe risks of "infection" that would make the English stock "degenerate" into wild Irishmen. When they staged the accent of Anglo-Irishmen, early seventeenth century playwrights drew on this racial understanding of language in the British Isles, and the accent of those characters functioned as auditory markers of the Anglo-Irish racial degeneration caused by physical and linguistic miscegenation. One can easily see how those anxieties surrounding English racial degeneration, first coined in the Irish context, could be extended to Afro-Britons, given the dominant social positioning of Afro-British women like Catelina (or her ancestor "Kate" in *Monsieur Thomas*) as prostitutes, sexually exploited maids, and potential nurses.

In *The English Moor*, the association of accents with racial degeneration is emphasized by the auditory parallelism established between Catelina the black maid and Quicksand's intellectually disabled bastard son, Timsy. Indeed, Timsy, a "simple child" most often referred to

as “the changeling” has been entrusted by Quicksands to Matthew Hulverhead: “for a certain sum which I did pay, ’twas articled that I should ne'er be troubled with it more” (4.5.853). Some of Quicksands’ young enemies convince Buzzard, a servant he unjustly dismissed, to disguise himself as Timsy so that they might, quite successfully, crash Quicksand’s masque. Buzzard’s disguise includes “long coats,” “a rock and a spindle” (4.5.814-815) with which he spins (his main occupation in Norfolk), and most importantly, a linguistic element: 90% of his lines consist in saying “Hey toodle loodle loodle loo!”—which, based on the definition of the verb “toodle”, Matthew Steggle glosses as “an instruction to make noise rather than a set of words to be spoken.” Timsy’s condition is partly constructed on an auditory mode, through his inability to speak English other than in broken bits combined with strange noises. The fact that Timsy and his crew should crash Quicksand’s masque and that his voice is heard a mere nine lines after Catelina’s delivers her last line in blackspeak, “I will do-a my best-a” (4.4.811), dramaturgically reinforces the bond between blackspeak and the “idiot’s” accent.

Quicksands thinks of his son Timsy in terms of degeneration. Degeneration, the idea that the child is lesser than his parents, that the family’s blood (known as “race” in the period) has been affected, that qualitative change is happening for the worse, is patent even in Timsy’s nickname: the “Changeling.” The question of degeneration is made even more urgent by Arnold’s statement that he is bringing Timsy back to his natural father for

> We are not bound
> To keep your child, and your child's children too …
> He has fetched up the bellies of sixteen
> Of his thrip-sisters.” (4.5.857-860)

The Changeling is fathering more changelings; degeneration is gaining traction.[227] In short, Timsy's "degenerate" status as intellectually disabled is constructed through his use of broken English, and the parallel set up for the audience between this broken English and Catelina's blackspeak reinforces the racializing dimension that blackspeak inherited from the stage tradition of the Irish accent. In other words, understood in relation to the tradition of the Irish stage accents, blackspeak constructs Catelina as a subject fit to be conquered and racialized in the ears of early modern London spectators.

4) Blackspeak and Early Modern Studies

In the third and last part of this chapter, I consider the critical stakes of studying blackspeak. I focus on two paradigms crucial to early modern race studies and to early modern studies at large, and I point out what new readings of those paradigms emerge when we examine them through the lens of blackspeak. Those paradigms are the standardization of national European languages and the power and limitations of blackface as a trope of racial performance.

i) Standardizing National Languages

A closer look at the linguistic dynamics at play between blackspeaking characters and audience members suggests that early modern racial imaginings might have played a role in the standardization of national languages in which early modern Europe was absorbed.

The Renaissance saw the rise of Castilian as official Spanish language over both local dialects and Latin—a rise famously marked by the 1492 publication of Antonio de Nebrija's first

[227] Note that Timsy's comic force resembles that of the *negros* characters we encountered in the Spanish tradition. Indeed, as a simpleton character, Timsy derives his raw comic effect from what Freud would identify as his (perpetual) childishness, his (clinically) deficient expenditure on intellectual matters, and his excessive expenditure on physical (sexual) matters.

grammar of the Castilian language, which he presented to queen Isabel as the instrument of empire. Consequently, Charlotte Stern argues, "Spaniards living at the court developed a new phonetic consciousness, perceiving differences in sound and frowning on regional and popular pronunciations as less than desirable" (Stern 227). Jerome Branche sees the popular use of accents on stage, including blackspeak, as a response to, and an ideological embrace of such language politics:

> Correas attested to the eventual de facto and de jure triumph of the vernacular, as official correspondence and philosophical and scientific treatises began to be published in Castilian. The corresponding repression by ridicule of the speech of the lower classes and of racial minorities, Jews, Moors, guineos [negros], gypsies, sayagos, lacayos, pastores, and so on, in favor of Castilian dominance can only underscore the role of literature as a ruling class tool for cultural and linguistic assimilation and conformity. (Branche 68)

While Branche is correct in pointing out that blackspeak was not the only stage accent that translated on stage the official language politics of the State, it is important to note that no other minority's stage accent (Jewish, Moorish, or Gypsy) ever came remotely close to achieving the degree of popularity that blackspeak had at the beginning of the seventeenth century. As far as stage accents are concerned*, negros* were the ultimate Other in Spain.

Branche insists on the connection between blackspeak and *Sayagués*.[228] He states that "Guinean (guineo), 'black talk' (habla de negros), or 'half talk' (media lengua) replicated the

[228] Originally designating the Leonese romance dialect spoken by the inhabitants of Sayago, a region close to Salamanca and famous for its geographic isolation, *Sayagués* quickly became the standard rustic jargon spoken by peasants, fools, and pastors—regardless of their actual geographic origins—in literary texts. From a local accent mocking a specific population's tardiness in joining into the modernization of the nation (Valbuena-Briones 56), it became a geographically neutral social accent, marking the backwardness, rusticity, and ignorance of the lower class**.** Paul Teyssier notes that, when Gil Vicente imitated *Sayagués* in his Portuguese plays, he did not try to resort to any regional dialectal feature. This suggests that, in the understanding of this major Iberian playwright, *Sayagués* was more about class than about a specific region (Teyssier 173-176). Popularized by Juan del Encina and Lucas

comic effect of the Sayagués spoken by the pastores [shepherds] in the liturgical poetry of the late 1400s" (Branche 67)—and it is true that the *Sayagués*-speaker is probably one of the literary ancestors of the blackspeaker.[229] An important difference, however, is that, while, according to John Brotherton, the foolish shepherds [*pastores-bobos*] were fighting to remain relevant and survive in the early modern age, *negros* characters were the (early) modern age. While *pastores-bobos* were rustic, *negros*, given the urban nature of slavery in the Peninsula, walked the very city streets where most theatre-goers live, when they did not work in those theatre-goers' houses. Brotherton claims that the decline of the *pastor-bobo* is to a large part due to the rise of the Italo-classical comedy of intrigue, and to the *Sayagués*-speaking Spanish rustic's unsuitedness to the drama of intrigue (Brotherton 197). A non-exclusive alternative explanation is, precisely, the rise of the blackspeaking *negro* character, a modern, urban, and racialized lower class Fool made *pastores-bobos* look obsolete and redundant.

Succeeding *Sayagués*, blackspeak was the main stage accent functioning in Spanish performance culture as a foil for Castilian. If, as Bourdieu argues, the difference between language and dialect is that language, being unmistakably "bound up with the State" has, "as

---

Fernandez (who both hailed from Salamanca) in their short pieces in *estilo pastoril* at the end of the fifteenth century, *Sayagués* remained an extremely popular theatrical fixture throughout the sixteenth century, under the influence of Lope de Rueda, and, later, Lope de Vega.

229 While the phonetic distortions proper to *Sayagués* are completely different from the distortions proper to blackspeak, both accents undoubtedly derived their comic force from the same perception of their speakers as childish, intellectually deficient, and excessively physical. The comic effect of those accents paired up with depictions of *Sayagués*-speakers's psychology as relatively close to stage *negro* psychology, that is, driven by "laziness, greed, ignorance, superstitiousness, boorishness, obscenity, and indifference" (Brotherton ix). For instance, Angel Valbuena-Briones notices that some of the puns occasioned by the phonetic distortions of *Sayagués* evidence "the obsession of plebeians with food" (Valbuena-Briones 58), which lends support to the idea that the *Sayagués*-speaker one of the ancestors of the bodily appetites-obsessed blackspeaker. In his study dedicated to the figure of the *pastor-bobo*, John Brotherton identifies the main dramaturgic functions of the *pastor-bobo* over time: a witness to the birth of Christ who "reflects the human condition before the coming of Christ" before he converts in religious theatre, a passive Fool, embodying "human folly and inadequacy," and as "wise Fool," a moralist who "can amuse the audience and rebuke them, delight and instruct them" (Brotherton 196). There is little doubt that those functions overlap with that of early modern stage *negros*.

opposed to dialect, benefited from the institutional conditions necessary for its generalized codification and imposition" (Bourdieu 45), then early modern theatre can be regarded as one of the institutions that contributed to turning Castilian into a language. Bourdieu further explains that, in the context of State formation, the "State language becomes the theoretical norm against which all linguistic practices are objectively measured" (45). That might not have been completely true for early modern theatre. To be more explicit: not all Madrid and Seville-dwellers hailed from Castilian-speaking areas. Not all of them spoke the language of the court. And this applies maybe even more strongly to early modern London, whose colossal immigrant population was characterized by a wide variety of foreign and regional accents. There is a good chance then, that for many audience-members, the phonetic distortions of blackspeak did not register against State language—be it Castilian or the King's English—but against dialectal versions of the national idiom.

In a context of linguistic fragmentation, blackspeak functioned as a caricatural common linguistic foil—one of the few linguistic things that such a variety of audience-members had in common. Indeed, to my knowledge, with the exception of a couple of *entremeses*, early modern Spanish blackspeak hardly interacts with other stage accents: it is usually contrasted in dialogue with unaccented Castilian. Similarly, in *The English Moor,* Catelina's blackspeak is contrasted with the English spoken by a London gallant, Banelass, presumably "Southern English," the "usual speech of the court and of London and of the shires lying about London within sixty miles, and not much above" (Puttenham 229). Thus, the routinely reenacted association of the blackspeaker with slavery (in Spain), lower status (in England) and exploitation in both, attributed by contrast the symbolic goods desirable within the market economy that had brought immigrants to the city in the first place to the mastery of what binary linguistic dramaturgies

constructed as the opposite of blackspeak: Castilian, or the King's English.

If "all symbolic domination presupposes, on the part of those who submit to it, a form of complicity which is neither passive submission to external constraint nor a free adherence to values" (Bourdieu 51), as far as language and accent are concerned, early modern theatre was an institution that invited this complicity from audience members. Bergson's theory of the comic is predicated on the idea that laughing in the playhouse is a collective experience, and that laughter is a collective punishment exercised against an individual whose idiosyncratic rigidity renders them unfit for social life: it is about asserting the interests of the group over those of the individual. By joining in the group laughter, an audience member positions oneself as a member of the normative collectivity. By laughing at blackspeak, audience members were joining in the urban collective that spoke the State's official language and followed its preferred pronunciation in pursuit of the associated symbolic goods that theatre indirectly promised them.

In that sense, the racial imaginings that conditioned representations of blackness on stage, and more specifically the performance technique of blackspeak, might have played a role in the standardization of national languages in European theatrical capitals. Blackspeak did not initiate those auditory dynamics of power: it inherited it from older stage accents, but it also brought the question closer to home, offering to urban city-dwellers and theatre-goers a black linguistic foil that resonated in their daily lives in new ways.

ii) Blackspeak and Blackface

The second paradigm that blackspeak allows us to see in a new light is the power of blackface as a master trope in race performance. As we saw in Chapters 1 and 2, early modern blackface did a tremendous amount of ideological work on stage, and the importance of the later

applications and developments of blackface in American culture helps explain why such a significant portion of early modern race scholarship has crystallized around it. In this section, I aim to show that, although blackface did do a lot of things, it did not do everything, and blackspeak, operating in conjunction with blackface, often performed tasks that blackface did not. Filling in gaps that were sometimes critical, blackspeak helped stabilize theatrical systems of racial representations that were becoming unstable under the pressure of social changes.

In Spanish theatrical culture, blackspeak addressed slavery-related epistemological and moral issues that blackface did not. The main epistemological issue at play is the split that was introduced by the development of black slavery in the early modern period into perceptions of black Africa and Africans. This split, immediately perceptible in visual culture and paintings from the early modern period, opposed negative perceptions of black savages or slaves from the *Guinea* region informed by contemporary trade with Subsaharan Africa to positive perceptions of black kings with a highly developed spirituality from Ethiopia informed by ancient and medieval accounts of Ethiopian civilization. Nowhere is this pairing more systematic than in the iconographic tradition of the Wisemen adoration, in which King Balthazar—who had turned black throughout Europe in the early fifteenth century to signify the inclusion of Africans within *Christianitas*—is almost systematically accompanied by at least one black servant whose social and spiritual inferiority to the black king is made obvious through various devices. In Rubens' 1609 *Adoration of the Magi* (Fig.13), for instance, King Balthazar's Caucasian features contrast strongly with the curly hair, round nose, and fuller lips of his child-like servant who, pouting, seems utterly unimpressed by the whole situation. That servant bears chains, which suggests that he himself, rather than the myrrh he carries, might be Balthazar's present for the newborn king.

Balthazar and his servant manifest the split early modern episteme of blackness.[230]

Blackface was not best suited to address this epistemological shift, to the extent that, visually, nothing distinguishes a character performed in blackface from another one. Blackface does not differentiate between Balthazar and his servant. On the contrary, plays in which white characters decide to go into blackface in order to hide their true identity often emphasize how interchangeable blackfaced characters are. Structurally, blackface could only unite *negros* characters; its chromatic variety sometimes aligned with emergent racial classifications from the Iberian empire, as we saw in Chapter 2, but it did not render spiritual distinctions. Thus, I argue that the epistemological shift triggered by the development of black slavery in early modern Iberia, registered on stage through the performance technique of blackspeak, which was particularly well suited to separate some black characters from others.

Naturally, this phenomenon is particularly observable in the dramatizations of the Wisemen's adoration of Jesus, such as Lope de Vega's *El nacimiento de Cristo* (1614), or *El coloquio Segundo de los pastores de Belen*, by Felipe Godínez—but not only. Blackspeak permeates all of the seventeenth century Spanish dramaturgy of blackness. In some black characters, the process of linguistic correction has been carried out: they are the *ladino* black characters of seventeenth century *comedia nueva*. Those characters include Balthazar, various black saints, and black male heroes such as Andrés de Claramonte's black soldier, or Ximénez de Enciso's black scholar, who constitute their lay avatars: the noble *negros*. Noble *negros* appear to be well integrated into white Spanish Catholic communities: their language, bodies, and souls have been perfectly disciplined, Europeanized, civilized. Their obsessive tendency to refer to themselves as "slaves" to God or some very highly placed aristocrat symbolically places

[230] Interestingly, this painting was soon purchased by Philip IV. It can still be admired at the Prado museum today.

their integration into Spanish society under the sign of a slavery that is both sublimated and sublimating.[231]

Having those characters speak in unaccented Castilian gives the audience more opportunities to relate to the black protagonist. But the linguistic dynamics of blackspeak that we observed in short plays still find their way into *comedia nueva* dramaturgy. Racialization follows its course, as those heroes are systematically paired and contrasted with *bozal* servant characters speaking in blackspeak. For instance, in *El Santo negro Rosambuco de la ciudad de Palermo*, Lope de Vega pairs up the black saint, Rosambuco-turned-Benito, with Lucrecia, a black female slave who finds him extremely attractive, but whom he rebukes, like all heroic *ladino* black males: for those black heroes either have no libido or marry white women. The contrast between them is set forth in linguistic terms from the start, when Lucrecia asks "*#tell the #*negra*: you *#come from Congo too?" [*decimo logo a la niegra/ si samo de monicongo*], and he responds, regal, "I am from Ethiopia" [*De Etiopia soy*].[232] Thus, perhaps paradoxically, it is the auditory performance technique of blackspeak that enabled stage representations to align with the paradigm of blackness that was dominant in visual culture—a paradigm that resulted from the epistemological shifts induced by the development and booming of black slavery.

Spanish Blackspeak also addressed a slavery-related moral question that blackface did not. By racializing Afro-diasporic people so efficiently, blackspeak helped produce on stage the

[231] The most obvious example of this sublimation rhetoric of slavery is of course Lope de Vega's play *El negro del mejor amo*, "The Best Master's Slave," in which the "slave" is a fictional *mulato* saint, and the "master" is God.

[232] The same pairing of a noble Ethiopian figure speaking in unaccented Castilian with a *bozal* black servant speaking in blackspeak can also be found in Calderón's late *comedia* on the queen of Sheba, *La sibila de oriente y gran reyna de Saba* (1682). The queen of Sheba is contrasted linguistically with her three *negra*s and her clownish *negro* called *Mandinga*. All servants speak in blackspeak, and Mandinga tries to warn the queen against foreign kings's deceitfulness in blackpeak: "#listen, #mistress, do not #believe him / for #white people / are #liars" [*mila, siola, no cleas / que la gente brancaza / mentiroza*] (Caldeón, *sibila* 339).

justification for the enslavement of Africans and Afro-descendants that the late sixteenth century commodifying hermeneutic configuration of blackface implicitly relied on. Indeed, as we saw in Chapter 2, the systematic rhetorical association of blackface with precious commodities (such as jet, bronze, or ebony) in Lope de Vega's and his successors' *comedias* rehearsed *ad nauseam* the commodification of black bodies that was taking place off stage. In that respect, it operated as a shortcut form of racialization, getting spectators accustomed to thinking about black people automatically as commodities. But it did not explicitly state the reason why those *negros* deserved to be treated as commodities. By contrast, blackspeak portrayed those characters as childish, intellectually deficient, and excessively physical, three characteristics that made them particularly suited for slavery as it was understood then. Weaving that hermeneutic of blackface together with the dynamics of blackspeak that I have described, racial impersonation performances combined two cognitive processes: one that familiarized audience members with slavery as an economic practice of human commodification (blackface), and one that justified slavery on moral grounds (blackspeak). Each performance technique maximized the impact of the other, working towards a greater racialization of Afro-diasporic people.

In *The English Moor* too, blackspeak brings to light some of the limitations of blackface as a performance trope of race. Indeed, when we understand Brome's blackspeak experiment in the light of the tradition of the Irish accent, we become aware of blackspeak's capacity to articulate the issue of the black presence in London in the late 1630s in straightforward political terms, something that blackface did not do at the time. As we saw in Chapter 1, the popularity of the diabolical hermeneutics of blackface, and its persistence throughout seventeenth century dramaturgy (a stubborn persistence that distinguishes the English

theatrical treatment of blackness from its Spanish and French counterparts) had the inconvenient effect of articulating the issue of black integration into the English social fabric exclusively in religious terms. And some playwrights, like Shakespeare in *Othello* (1604) and Webster in *The White Devil* (1612) had already put some pressure on a reductive vocabulary that could easily be manipulated for the wrong reasons and obscured the importance of factors such as skin color, class, and gender with respect to black integration. It is in the wake of those earlier dramaturgic gestures that I read Brome's experimental use of blackspeak and the way it uses the spectators' corrective linguistic impulses to establish a relation predicated on fantasies of conquest and racial degeneration between audience and black characters. A city that was getting used to the black presence (not out of cosmopolitan goodness but out of self-interest), and a theatre aiming to be the "arena within which urban social relations were regulated and urban problems negotiated" (J. Howard 3) with some degree of effectiveness needed a rich, capacious, and plural vocabulary to address an issue like black integration. Modestly, Brome's experiment with blackspeak contributed to enriching that vocabulary.

In *The English Moor,* blackspeak speaks to the conceptual limitations of the dominant hermeneutic configuration of blackface of English early modern theatre, but it also underlines some technical limitations, namely, the increasingly perceived lack of realism of cross-racial performances. Indeed, in the two scenes where Catelina speaks in blackspeak, Banelass is up close, dangerously close to her: he is clearly holding her, is probably trying to kiss her in the first scene, and is close enough to comment on "the elevation of her nostrils" in the second scene (4.5.810). Someone that close was likely to realize that the blackface make up on Millicent and Phillis' faces was only make-up; thus, the women's resort to blackspeak can be understood as an effort to consolidate their disguise in desperate unexpected circumstances. Of course, the world

of fiction does not operate under the same rules as the real world, and artifices that are immediately noticed in the real world can go unnoticed in the fictional world represented on stage by the power of convention. Yet, within the English stage tradition, to pass as black maids, Millicent and Phillis did not need to use any accent: the fact that they should resort to it specifically at moments when a man is standing extremely close to them points towards a panicked decision-making process informed by some of the real world's rules of verisimilitude. Interestingly, this gesture towards the lack of realism inherent in the technique of blackface intervenes amidst a wave of plays including Massinger's *The Parliament of Love* (1624), Berkeley's *The Lost Lady* (1638), and Hemminge's *The Fatal Contract* (1639), that star no black characters, but only characters of white women who decide to use blackface in order to become unrecognizable and to operate in the dark— in other words, a wave of plays that center on the artificiality of blackface.

However, by the end of Brome's city comedy, spectators have been able to compare Catelina, a fake Blackamoor in the world of the play, and the black musicians and dancers hired by Quicksands for his masque, who are real Blackamoors in the world of the play. Those Blackamoors speak in unaccented English, which, in retrospect, makes Catelina's blackspeak appear as a mark of artificiality. Thus, paradoxically, what started as a response to the lack of realism inherent in blackface appears just as artificial as blackface. What this loop signals is that creating convincing performances of racial impersonation was then experienced by theatre-makers (should we consider Millicent and Phillis as theatre-makers) as hard, and increasingly so in a social context where spectators' familiarity with real Afro-Britons kept growing. In that sense, blackspeak functions in this play as a failed attempt at stabilizing a system of racial representations that was coming under pressure due to social and demographic changes in

London. While, given the proportion of lost early modern plays, it is hard to know whether Brome's experimentation with blackspeak was an isolated case or whether blackspeak did operate in a larger corpus, the absence of blackspeak in post-Restoration drama suggests that this concern with the stabilization of shaky theatrical systems of racial representations was specific to the Caroline period.

It is not my intention in this chapter to construct blackface and blackspeak as antithetical techniques based on a radical divide between vision and sound. Jonathan Sterne has criticized scholarly accounts that approach the differences between sight and hearing as transhistorical "biological, psychological, and physical facts" with the effect of "idealizing hearing (and by extension speech as a kind of pure interiority" (Sterne, *Audible Past* 15). This idealization, Sterne claims, derives from a certain understanding of Christian theology that has informed the development of orality studies since the middle of the twentieth century.[233] It is true that, to study sound, "we do not need to assume that sound draws us into the world while vision separates us from it" (Sterne, *Audible Past* 18). In this chapter I have analyzed the comic force of black speech and blackspeak through the lens of laughter mechanisms that were first theorized (by Bergson and Freud) based on visual examples, and I hope to have shown that in many ways, blackface and blackspeak functioned together and maximized each other's impact. While this chapter also brought to light some functions specific to blackspeak that blackface did not fulfill, the reverse holds true, and I do not mean to suggest that auditory technique essentialized black Afro-diasporic people more strongly than visual techniques. As the last pages of this chapter will show, the dialectics of essence and surface were at play in blackspeak just as much as in

[233] For a detailed account of this theological bias specifically directed at Walter Ong's *Orality and Literacy*, see Jonathan Sterne. "The Theology of Sound, A critique of Orality." *Canadian Journal of Communication*, vol. 36, 2011, pp. 207-225.

blackface. Auditory and visual techniques collaborated to racialize Afro-diasporic people, and the next chapter, focusing on black dance, rhythm, and movements on stage explores this collaboration further.

5) Conclusion: The Mimetic Impulse

It was not long before early modern theatre, with its compulsive habit of turning on to itself, produced *mises-en-abime* of blackspeak the way it had produced *mises-en-abime* of blackface. In those scenes, white characters enthusiastically deliver a few lines in blackspeak before breaking out into unaccented Castilian or English again. For instance, in *Entremés del sacristan hechizero* [The Wizard Sexton], published in Madrid in 1680, a silly sexton, eager to impress a lady, claims that his magic hat enables whoever wears it to speak any language in the world. The lady and her witty maid, Juana, decide to play along in order to mock him:

Sexton: Which language do you want to know?

Juana: I want to know blackspeak!

Sexton: Fine. Put on the bonnet.

She puts on the bonnet, and says whichever bits of blackspeak she already knows.

Juana: *By Allah, how are we #doing, #sir?

Sexton: So, what do you think, eh?

Lady: That there is good reason to love you. ("sacristan" 195-196) [234]

Juana's knowledge of blackspeak is limited: she only delivers one line, and that line contains the most textbook grammatical and phonetic distortions of blackspeak. Yet Juana's excitement and

[234] "*Sacristan: Que lengua quieres hablar?/ Juana: Saber deseo la negra./ Sacristan: Pues, ponte el bonete./ Ponese el bonete, y habla de negra, algo/ De lo que supiere./ Juana: Alá, como zamo, cagayera./ Sacristan: Que os parece?/ Dama: Que no en vano te quiero."* ("sacristan" 195-196)

her genuine desire to play with accents draw attention to the pleasure of blackspeak and to what we might call a mimetic impulse. This blackspeak *entremés* is not an isolated case.[235] Such plays come late in the seventeenth century, and the reflexivity that characterizes them is symptomatic of the maturity of the trope by that time in Spanish culture. *Mises-en-abime* put the emphasis on a tacit premise of blackspeak's comic: the importance of the performer's whiteness. For the audience to take pleasure in accents, those have to be fake. As an illuminating counterpoint, we might want to consider the *entremés* by Luis Quiñones de Benavente, *Las dueñas*, which was performed in 1645 in the basin of the Buen Retiro palacial complex: it featured a real Afro-Spaniard. The black performer stole the show with his dancing, but his lines were unaccented. For if the performer was not white, what fun could there be in blackspeak?

The English Moor too emphasizes the importance of the performer's whiteness and the irresistibility of the mimetic impulse. During the first blackspeak scene, Banelass falls prey to the mimetic impulse. "Millicent: Then I shall speak a more a. / Nathaniel And Ile not lose the Moor-a for more then I / Will speak-a" (4.4.730-731). Millicent has only spoken a total of five lines in blackspeak, but that has been sufficient for Banelass to identify the main phonetic features of of that accent, and to reproduce them. Banelass has no particular reason to mock Catelina's accent at this point. He just cannot help it: his imitation is brought about by an irresistible impulse. At that moment, vertiginously, we hear Banelass imitating Phillis' accent, which is an imitation of Millicent's accent, which is an imitation of the accent of an absent Afro-British woman whose present counterparts—the performing Moors contracted by Quicksands for his masque—speak without any accent. Those two little lines bring our attention simultaneously to the disconnection between blackspeak and any real Afro-British speech, and to the strength of the mimetic impulse.

[235] See for instance *La mojiganga de la pandera*, by Calderón, published in 1706.

Freud writes that "mimicry is the child's best art and the driving motive of most of his games" (Freud 226). If, indeed, we laugh when we identify someone's behavior as childish, then it is possible that the audience's laughter when they heard blackspeak was not directed solely at the black character, but also at the white actor performing cross-racial mimickry. And by extension, at the spectators who would replicate blackspeak by recounting the play they just saw to their acquaintances, by joining into the choir's blackspeak song when they attended Church, or by reading playtexts and *villancicos* out loud in their own houses. Due to blackspeak's intense social circulation, at least in Spain, auditory racial impersonation was practiced by a large number of people, and blackspeak consumers were very likely to become blackspeak producers.

If, when they laughed at blackspeak, audience members were also, consciously or subconsciously, laughing collectively at their own childish love for cross-racial mimickry—their own mimetic impulse—theatre history suggests that, unlike what comedy theorists argue or hope for, laughter is not always an effective form of social punishment. Indeed, in the version of blackspeak that twenty-first century performance culture uses, for all the changes that have mercifully transformed the performance technique, the love for cross-racial mimickry has subsisted and still makes audience members chuckle. The mimetic impulse is still thriving.

To appreciate what has changed and what has remained in place let us consider one example of contemporary blackspeak. In 2005, Moroccan Sephardic Jew Gad Elmaleh, one of France's favorite standup comedians, famous for the mock-Maghrebin accent he uses to construct many characters, declared during his show "*L'Autre c'est moi*" [I am the Other]:

> I hate clichés. It's like journalists when they ask: "Don't you feel like you are disavowing your origins a bit in your new show?" I say: "No, I don't, what makes you say that?" And they respond: "Because you speak normally in that show." [*Audience laughs*] You think *I *#have spoken like this #all my #life? It's not a movie, #lady. You think *I *came to France and I had a treatment to get #cured from myself, or #what? [*Audience laughs*] But

> seriously though, it would be so funny if there were cures to lose one's accent and disavow one's origins. I mean it would be sad, but it would be funny to see it unfold. Imagine: they have to take a treatment, and one day, one guy in a meeting has a fit. He forgot to take his treatment! He's been in France for thirty years, he has a super important job, and he has a fit in front of thirty people—they find him out! There he is, in the middle of that meeting: "I would like to see two doctrines subsist in this company, #both the #documented #strategy on #most—Argh! [*Audience laughs. Gad Elmaleh pretends to swallow a pill*] Ahem, but also the recognized life-saving infrastructure which—" [*Audience laughs*] God I hate those clichés! Hate them! … We're all different! I wish I could take those clichés, kill them, twist them, and pile them up on a plaza that I'd call "#Clichés plaza"! [*Audience laughs*].[236]

Given the progressive orientation of Elmaleh's show and his own Maghrebin origins, blackspeak (or, to be exact, its North-African equivalent, Maghrebinspeak) is not meant to function here as a racializing tool. And of course, this is not strictly-speaking an act of racial impersonation, because Elmaleh *is* (proudly and vocally so) Moroccan like the characters he is portraying—he "Is the Other," as the title announces. With regard to racial impersonation, Elmaleh (like many French comedians of color) positions his performances in a grey area, by using an ethnic accent that does not match the unaccented way he usually speaks (and the audience *knows* it), but an accent that he is still socially allowed to use in public because it matches his origins.[237]

The transcript of Elmaleh's skit is unambiguous: the audience members laugh when Elmaleh breaks in and out of Maghrebinspeak. They take delight in the emphatically artificial

[236] Elmaleh is punning here on "cliché" and "Clichy." Indeed "Clichy Plaza" exists: it is a square in the notoriously ethnically mixed lower class eighteenth district in Paris, which Elmaleh often refers to in his skits.

[237] Thirty years ago, it was still socially acceptable for white comedians to use blackspeak on French national TV. While popular protest has brought an end to this era, the idea that blackspeak is as offensive as blackface is far from being unanimously accepted in France. Interviewed on BFMTV in April 2015, comedian Micheel Leeb, for instance, repeated what he has been saying for the last fifteen years: that the "ethnic sketches" that made him famous in the 1980s were not racist in nature, and that he does not understand why they upset spectators so. Gad Elmaleh, on the other hand, is far from being alone in using ethnic accents to advance a progressive agenda. In contemporary French culture, the lack of parts available for actors of color has occasioned, over the course of the last fifteen years, the rise of a new generation of stand up comedians of color—encouraged by the development of programs like the "Jamel Comedy Club" in 2006. Those comedians very often draw upon their own life experience as first-generation French, handling the issue of integration, and resorting to North-African, Subsaharan African, or Caribbean "accents of accents" as they do so. While those artists perform important and energizing work, their turn to the genre of stand-up comedy attest to the daunting yet unaddressed diversity issue of the French entertainment industry.

mimickry that those moments of transition underline. They enjoy the virtuosic labor that allows performers to produce blackspeak and that is the flipside of the clumsy excessive labor put by non-white characters into their inept elocution. The transcript also shows that audience members laugh at the journalists who believed that Elmaleh's stage accent was real. Spectators seem to get the message that comedians of color like Elmaleh might hope to impart as they break in and out of accent: that those accents and the larger stereotypes that accompany them, those "plazas of clichés," have never been real. In a sense, performances like Gad Elmaleh's allow spectators to gratify their own cross-racial mimetic impulses while laughing at tired racist prejudices.

Such performances tell spectators that they can have their cake and eat it too. No wonder they should be so popular. There lies the rub: how can the dematerialization of racial clichés accord with the pre-conscious perception of accented characters as childish, excessively physical and intellectually deficient upon which laughter structurally relies, according to Freud? The grey areas in which such moments of auditory racial impersonation thrive in our time deserve further examination. Blackspeak and its cognates are alive and well in popular performance culture today, and they constitute a field where multicultural Western societies currently negotiate some of their most important social tensions. In the conversation that should surround this field, a turn to theatre history and to early modern blackspeak might teach us a thing or two.

CHAPTER 4

BLACK MOVES:
RACE, DANCE, AND POWER PLAY IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

1) Introduction: the Politics of Movement

The third part of Thomas Tryon's *Friendly Advice to the Gentlemen Planters* (1684) presents readers with a vivid scene between a West Indian master and his black slave Sambo:

> Master: I call'd you to make us some Sport, let us see one of your Dances, such as are used in your own Country, with all your odd Postures and Tricks, for Diversion; I have heard you are the best at it of all my People.
> Slave: Boon Master! If you will have me Dance upon mine Head, or Caper on the top of the House, I must do it, though I break my Neck; for you are become Lord both of my Feet, and every part of me, but I fear I shall not be able at present to answer your Expectation handsomly, I am so much out of humour, and unfit for Feats of Activity.
> Master: Why? What's the matter Sirrah! I'll warrant, you have been frollicking so long amongst your Companions that now you'll pretend you are Weary.
> Slave: Truly, Sir! this being the only Day in the Week you spare us from hard labour, and allow us for Recreation, we do a Sundayes amongst our selves, endeavour to forget our Slavery, and skip about, as if our Heels were our own, so long sometimes, till our Limbs are almost as weary with that, as with working.
> (Tryon 147-8)

The opening of Tryon's dialogue captures the ambivalent power dynamics of the slave dances recorded across the colonial Atlantic world from the 1660s onwards.[238] Atlantic slave dances, such as slave ship dances and plantation dances, were ambivalent to the extent that they functioned as a site for masters to exercise their power over black bodies, and for slaves to build communities, retain African cultural practices, and mock their masters simultaneously.[239] In

[238] The first recorded slave ship dances dates back to 1664 (Fabre 34).

[239] On the ambivalent power dynamics in Atlantic black dances, see Saidiya V. Hartman. *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America*. Oxford University Press, 1997. "In 'going before

Tryon's dialogue, for instance, the master exercises his authority over Sambo's body by demanding a dance, while the slaves use dancing as a way of reclaiming ownership over their own bodies (dancing "as if our heels were our own"). Clearly, 1680s white colonialists such as Thomas Tryon were aware of the ambivalent power dynamics of Afro-diasporic slave dances.

Rather than assuming that the ambivalent power dynamics of Afro-diasporic dances originated in the Atlantic world in the second half of the seventeenth century, the present chapter locates the origin of those Atlantic power dynamics in late sixteenth century metropolitan Europe. Starting at the turn of the sixteenth century, a multi-directional circulation of emerging racial ideas and performance techniques surrounding blackness across porous national borders led to the development of a particularly vivid trans-European choreographic idiom of blackness. I call this idiom "black dances." In this chapter, I bring to light the black dances performed in metropolitan Europe at the turn of the sixteenth century both off stage and on stage, and I show that black dances were perceived as an ambivalent medium for expressing interracial power relations from the moment Sub-Saharan African slaves were brought to the Iberian Peninsula, long before Thomas Tryon's time. Tracing black dances in late sixteenth and early seventeenth century Spanish, English, and French performance cultures, I argue that the theatrical renderings

---

the master', the enslaved were required to sing or dance for the slave owner's pleasure as well as to demonstrate their submission, obsequiousness, and obedience. What was demanded by the master was simulated by the enslaved; yet the capitulation of the dominated to these demands must be considered as pragmatism rather than resignation since one either complied with the rules governing socially sanctioned behavior or risked punishment. In addition, these performances constituted acts of defiance conducted under the cover of nonsense, indirection, and seeming acquiescence. By virtue of such tactics, these performances were sometimes turned against their instrumental aims; at the same time, the reliance on masquerade, subterfuge, and indirection also obscured the small acts of resistance conducted by the enslaved" (Hartman 8). Scholarship underlining the ambivalence of black slave dances in the Atlantic world starting in the 1660s focuses primarily on slave ship and plantation dances. Besides Hartman, it includes but is not limited to Geneviève Fabre. "The Slave Ship Dance." *Black Imagination and the Middle Passage*, edited by Maria Diedrich, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and Carl Pedersen. Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 33-47; Katrina Hazzard-Gordon. *Jookin': The Rise of Social Dance Formation in African-American Culture*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990; and Rodreguez King-Dorset. *Black Dance in London, 1730-1850: Innovation, Tradition and Resistance.* Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 2008.

of dances that were either danced by Afro-diasporic people or imagined as African (sometimes both at the same time) helped crystallize in the public sphere emerging cultural notions about blackness, and helped conceptualize black dance as a practice steeped in interracial power play. Theatre popularized a conception of black dances that would inform colonial mindsets later in the century.

A quick look at the structure of early modern European dance culture can help us understand why dance was a particularly efficient medium for racializing blackness. Much more is known today about court dances than about the rest of early modern dance culture, because court dances, embedded as they were in the world of power and politics, were much more abundantly described, documented and commented upon than any other dances at the time. Dance was integrated in the everyday life of European courts, and it was deployed lavishly and memorably on any occasion of State (coronation of a monarch, entry of a ruler into a city, visit of foreign ambassadors, etc.). Over-represented in the archive then, courtly dances should not blind us to the pervasiveness of dance in early modern European societies at large. From marketplaces to bourgeois houses, city halls, parliaments, and aristocratic mansions in the countryside (McGowan, *Dance in the Renaissance* 9)—not to mention, public streets during religious pageants or festivals, common people's wedding celebrations, children's baptisms, and, of course, commercial playhouses—dance was everywhere. The importance of dance in early modern societies is confirmed by the growing number of dancing masters advertising their services all across Europe throughout the period (Marsh 331). Dance was a major form of entertainment: it was available to all, and it grew steadily in popularity throughout period.

In the same way that dances circulated across national borders, creating a rich array of regional variations on the same choreographies, they also circulated across class borders. Dance

historians have brought to light some patterns of circulation and cross-influence between courtly dances and social dances performed in other settings. While many well-known social dances (such as *pavanes, branles, courantes,* and *voltas,* to name but a few) were performed at court and integrated into masques, ballets, or mascarades (Sutton), reciprocally, dances that had first been designed for court performances were often adapted and integrated into the repertoire of social dances available to all (McGowan, *Dance in the Renaissance* 2). As for commercial theatre, it cannibalized all dances in existence for its own benefit. Thus, communication between the various social settings of early modern dance culture enabled black dance to permeate all the loci of that culture, thereby maximizing the spread of the racial discourse its core.

Consisting primarily in couple dances, dance had emerged in Renaissance Europe as a practice that shaped gender presentation (since women's and men's dancing styles obeyed different esthetic codes), as well as class presentation (Nevile, *Body Politick* 15-16). Indeed, a pillar of aristocratic education, an indispensible social grace, and a major asset for courtiers in their endeavor to secure royal preferment, proficiency in dance was understood to express the social rank of a dancer.[240] Even when an aristocrat was performing a common social dance, as Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier* state, the rules of decorum had to be respected: decorum demanded that aristocrats use a specific kinetic style marking their noble pedigree (Castiglione 74-75). Dance was used to fashion race in the dominant sense of the term in the Renaissance, when race referred primarily to rank, or class distinction. Quite naturally, then, when the

[240] The positive status of dance in aristocratic milieus, its perception as a means of self-improvement, derives from the Neo-Platonic view of dance that informs Renaissance dance treatises: "Goodness of dancing depends on the goodness of the dancer. His virtuous mind and lofty sentiments, with a trained and developed intellect, make him a person with a body and mind that are in harmony with each other. He can 'tune in' with the harmony of the world around and express in the harmony of music and dancing" (Berghaus 59). This essentialist view of dance proficiency might have informed, to some extent, the great lengths to which aristocrats went in order to hide the labor involved in acquiring dance skills.

epistemological shift that is of interest to us took place, that is, when race started referring not only to rank but also to physiological difference at the turn of the sixteenth century, dance was well positioned to fashion the body along the lines of this new emergent racial paradigm too. Because of its long-standing entanglement with the racial matrix, dance was particularly well suited as a medium to racialize what read as a black body at the turn of the sixteenth century.

As early modern writers such Sebastián de Covarrubias or Thoinot Arbeau themselves strongly suspected, black dance, while generally imagined and labeled as quintessentially African, may not have corresponded to any of the authentic African dances imported by Afro-diasporic people into Spain, England, or France. The gap between black dances and authentic African dances is as hard to measure as the gap between blackspeak and real Afro-European accents (see Chapter 3). Thus, I use the phrase black dances to refer to dances that, regardless of authenticity, were defined as black in the collective imagination of the dominant segment of the European populations that enthusiastically consumed them. Those dances were often performed by white people in blackface as well as professional black Afro-diasporic dancers, who delivered what the audience wanted by performing black dances for a living, with, perhaps, the effect of blurring the lines and increasing the authenticity capital of those dances over time.

In many respects, the following ballet entry, performed in 1649 at the Collège des Jésuites in Avignon as part of the burlesque *Ballet des divers entretiens de la fontaine de Vaucluse* captures the main features of early seventeenth century European black dances:

> Two eunuchs, slaves to the Emperor-of-the-lands-that-have-not-been-discovered-yet, who, on a whim of nature, are born half-white and half-black, while waiting for their master, made an entry that was so entertaining, with steps and postures so unknown in these regions, that they left spectators enraptured to a degree that cannot be expressed.

("fontaine de Vaucluse" 203)[241]

Those dances are strange, attached to the practice of slavery in lands begging to be colonized, half of the time performed by black people, half of the time performed by white people in blackface, and—most importantly—white audiences cannot get enough of them. As the Avignon ballet suggests, black dances were extremely popular. They moved between various performance spaces, from Andalusian street processions to public stages all over Spain; from Rouen scaffold stages to court ballets and Parisian theatres in France; from royal pageants in Edinburgh to court masques and London theatres in England. From street processions to public theatre to court theatre, black dances took the different loci of early modern European theatre culture by storm in the first decades of the seventeenth century. Their racializing effect impacted a wide socio-economic range of spectators "enraptured to a degree that cannot be expressed."

In that sense, black dances are an important component of the racializing discourse deployed around black Afro-diasporic people in early modern European popular culture, but they have yet to receive sustained critical attention. Indeed, in English early modern race studies, interest in *The Masque of Blackness* has not yet blossomed into a larger concern for the performance of blackness through dance in English theatre; while the field of English early modern dance studies, which has produced fascinating accounts of the reception and reimaginings of Indian dances from the New World in European cultures lately, has not extended its attention to African dances.[242] In French early modern studies, few race scholars working on

[241] *"Deux eunuques, esclaves de l'empereur des terres qui ne sont pas découvertes, et qui, par un fol caprice de la nature, naissent demy-blancs demy-noirs, attendans la venue de leur maître, firent une entrée si divertissante, avec des pas et des postures si peu connus en ces régions que les spectateurs restèrent dans un ravissement que l'on ne peut exprimer.*" ("fontaine de Vaucluse" 203)

[242] The most illuminating readings of the *Masque of Blackness* include Kim F. Hall. *Things of Darkness: Economics of Race and Gender in Early Modern England.* Cornell University Press, 1996; Stephen Orgel. *The Jonsonian Masque.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965; Clare McManus. *Women on the Renaissance Stage: Anna of*

the seventeenth century include ballets in their corpus, and those who do, like Sylvie Chalaye, tend to treat librettos as drama without factoring in the unscripted element of dance; meanwhile French early modern ballet scholars reckon very little with race, and those who do turn their attention predominantly to oriental "*Turqueries*" or Indian dances.[243] A notable exception is Mark Franko, whose ideas on *Mores galants* were seminal for this chapter.[244] The field of Spanish early modern studies has produced detailed accounts of street procession ethnic dances, but those analyses have yet to be put in conversation with discussions of black dances on stage, in the hands of playwrights such as Lope de Vega or Simón Aguado.[245] In short, early modern

---

Denmark and Female Masquing in the Stuart Court, 1590-1619. Manchester University Press/Palgrave (US), 2002; Virginia Mason Vaughan. *Performing Blackness on English Stages, 1500-1800*. Cambridge University Press, 2005; Mary Floyd Wilson. "Temperature, Temperance, and Racial Difference in Ben Jonson's 'The Masque of Blackness'." *English Literary Renaissance*, vol. 28, no. 2, 1998, pp. 183-209; Hardin Aasand. "'To Blanch an Ethiop, and Revive a Corse': Queen Anne and The Masque of Blackness." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, vol. 32, no. 2, 1992, pp. 271-285; Andrea Stevens. "Mastering Masques of Blackness: Jonson's 'Masque of Blackness', The Windsor text of 'The Gypsies Metamorphosed', and Brome's 'The English Moor'." *English Literary Renaissance,* vol. 39, no. 2, 2009, pp. 396-426; and Bernadette Andrea. "Black Skin, The Queen's Masques: Africanist Ambivalence and Feminine Author(ity) in the Masques of 'Blackness' and 'Beauty'." *English Literary Renaissance*, vol. 29, no. 2, 1999, pp. 246-281. On the reception of Indian dances in early modern Europe, see Paul A. Scolieri. *Dancing the New World: Aztecs, Spaniards, and the Choreography of Conquest*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013; Olivia A. Bloechl, *Native American Song at the Frontiers of Early Modern Music*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008; and Gavin Hollis. *The Absence of America: the London Stage, 1576-1642*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

[243] Sylvie Chalaye. *Du Noir au Nègre: L'image du Noir au théâtre (1550-1960)*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998. Ballet Scholars paying attention to Indian dances and "Turqueries" include Ellen Welch in "The Specter of the Turk in Early Modern French Court Entertainments." *Esprit Créateur, 53:* 4, pp. 84-97, and "Dancing the Nation: Performing France in the Seventeenth-Century *Ballets des nations*." *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 13.2 (2013), pp. 3-23, as well as Margaret McGowan. *La Danse à la Renaissance, Sources livresques et albums d'images*. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 2012; and V. K. Preston, "Un/Becoming Nomad: Marc Lescarbot, Movement, and Metamorphosis in *Les Muses de la Nouvelle France." History, Memory, Performance*, edited by David Dean, Yana Meerzon, and Kathryn Prince, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. Michel Paquot briefly pays attention to Subsaharan Africans in his ideologically problematic yet foundational *Les Etrangers dans les divertissements de la cour, de Beaujoyeulx à Molière (1581-1673)*. Bruxelles: Palais des Académies, 1932.

[244] Mark Franko. *Dance as Text, Ideologies of the Baroque Body*. Cambridge University Press, 1993.

[245] On Sevillian street processions, see Jean Sentaurens. *Séville et le théâtre: de la fin du Moyen Age à la fin du XVIIe siècle*. Lille: Atelier national de reproduction des thèses, Université de Lille III; Talence: Diffusion, Presses universitaires de Bordeaux, Université de Bordeaux III, 1984; and Lynn M. Brooks. *The Dances of the Processions of Seville in Spain's Golden Age*. Kassel: Ed. Reichenberger, 1988. Studies of *danzas de negros* on stage are currently dominated by Aurelia Martín-Casares and Marga G. Barranco. See their co-written articles "The musical legacy of black Africans in Spain: A review of our sources." *Anthropological Notebook*s, vol. 15, no. 2, 2009, pp.

black dances have often received brilliant attention, but always in a sporadic manner.

The present chapter is based on the premise that providing a sustained account of European black dances as early modern racial technology involves looking at several kinds of theatre (processional, commercial, private) and at several national traditions (English, French, Spanish) together. Naturally, the quantity of sources recording black dances varies drastically from country to country, reflecting important differences between the black demographics in Spain and the rest of early modern Europe. However, this chapter gives weight to the available English and French sources on black dances in order to underline transnational commonalities. Within a comparative framework, I analyze some of the effects, perceptions, and uses of black dances in the hands of different population groups.[246] I show how, in the three countries under consideration, black dances operated as racializing tools that construed Afro-diasporic people as endowed with essential qualities justifying their positioning at the bottom of the social order. I also propose, however, that this racializing tool, oppressive by nature, was used for purposes of self-affirmation by various groups that either were or perceived themselves as oppressed. A racializing technique used by many to claim or reclaim mobility and agency, early modern European black dances channel social energies into performances of power relations.

This chapter moves chronologically, from the end of the sixteenth century to the end of the seventeenth century, and it moves from Spain to England via France. In the first section of

---

51-60; and "Popular Literary Depictions of Black African Weddings in Early Modern Spain." *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme,* vol. 31, no. 2, 2008, pp. 107-121. See also Marcella Trambaioli. "Apuntes sobre el guineo o baile de negros: tipologías y funciones dramáticas." *Actas del VI Congreso de la Asociación Internacional Siglo de Oro*, edited by María Luisa Lobato and F. Domínguez Matito, Madrid: Iberoamericana-Vervuert, 2004, pp. 1773-1783.

[246] Because bringing together the black dances of those three distinct national traditions requires a clear and intense focus, I will not address the question of black dances similarity to or difference from other ethnic dances, such as Gypsy, Indian, or Turkish dances in this chapter. For sharp studies on those other ethnic dances on stage, see the works mentioned in footnotes #242 and #243.

this chapter, I show that, in Spain, *danzas de negros*, Creole Andalusian black dances subsumed in the strenuous priapic dancing style called *guineo,* heavily sexualized Afro-diasporic people in popular perceptions, associating them with the lower stratum of the body. *Danzas de negros* were featured in social dance settings, street processions, and commercial theatres from the sixteenth century onwards, in keeping with the increase of the Afro-Spanish population and the development of color-based slavery in the Iberian empire. Yet those dances were also used by Afro-Spaniards to re-negotiate the terms of slavery, either symbolically, as a way to reclaim mobility and ownership over their own bodies, or concretely, as a way of earning enough money to buy their own freedom, or a way of ingratiating the controversial black confraternities with the Spanish population. In other words, the ambivalent power dynamics of late seventeenth century Atlantic black dance were already in place in sixteenth century metropolitan Spain.

In the second section of this chapter, I turn to France in order to bring to light an early seventeenth century French choreographic tradition that animalized the body language of black Afro-diasporic people, both in social dance settings and in court ballets. In a culture that read movement as expressing the soul, infusing black body language with animal forms downgraded Afro-diasporic people in the Great Chain of Being, giving them a liminal position in mankind that could only translate as a lowly position in the social order. This choreographic tradition also had currency across the Channel, informing English "antics" that animalized black bodies.

In the third section of this chapter, I examine burlesque integrations of black dances into court performances in France and in England, and I show that early seventeenth century French ballets and English masques were set into motion by power relations and power struggles that strongly echo those at the heart of the Spanish tradition of *danzas de negros*. Indeed, European aristocrats of both genders seem to have performed black dances allegorically in order to contest

various aspects of the royal authority that they experienced as tyrannical, and to re-negotiate their condition in relation to the King, which they experienced as a form of slavery. Early seventeenth century burlesque court performances (which include, among others, *Le Grand bal de la douairière de Billebahaut* and *The Masque of Blackness*) often capture the status of European black dances as a medium for re-negotiating power relations in the context of slavery.

In the last section of this chapter, I turn to English commercial theatre, and I argue that Philip Massinger's *The Bondman* (1624), in which dance functions as a conduit expressing shifting power relations between black slave and white master characters, brings together the various features of the black dance traditions from early seventeenth century England, France, and Spain previously delineated. Indeed, *The Bondman* simultaneously draws on the Anglo-French choreographic tradition that animalizes black body language, and echoes the capacity of contemporary Spanish black dances to express Afro-Spanish desires for physical, social, and geographical mobility. *The Bondman*, probably in response to the increase of the black population in 1620s London, produced a prototype of black dance for the commercial theatre that would gain traction in the second half of the seventeenth century, as the English colonial drift deepened, culminating in writings such as Tryon's *Friendly Advice to the Gentlemen Planters*. Finally, I highlight the relevance of early modern black dances to our cultural moment.

2) Spanish *Guineo*: Black Dance, Slavery, and Mobility

The travel literature available to early modern Europeans conveyed the certainty that dancing was second nature to Sub-Saharan Africans, starting with Leo Africanus' statement that, as opposed to his fellow North Africans, "*negros* know how to live the good life: they are loyal by nature, they pamper travellers, and do all they can to have all the pleasures possible, always

dancing, always engaged in parties, feasts, and various other merriments. They have a better time more than all the other Africans."[247] In the Spanish cultural imagination, black people's love for dancing was strong, and if the witnesses of the time are to be believed, Spaniards' love for watching black people dance was just as strong. In a letter dated June 1582, Philip II himself writes to his daughters that he rushed to the window to see black dances performed by Afro-Portuguese people in the streets of Lisbon, whose black population was more significant than Madrid's (Lowe 41). White Spaniards could also observe black dances in Andalusia, where, as chronicler Diego Ortiz de Zuñiga writes in 1677, "*negros* had been treated with benignity since the time of Henry III, and were authorized to gather for their dances and parties on resting days: that way they showed up for work willingly and tolerated captivity better" (Zuñiga 374).[248] In the *entremés Los mirones*, Cervantes mentions the Sevillian church of "Saint-Mary-The-White and its little square where a huge crowd of *negros* and *negras* usually gather" to dance.[249] The pleasure that Andalusians took in watching Afro-diasporic dances on such occasions is evoked in the *entremés del platillo* (1602) by Simón Aguado, when the bailiff, instead of pursuing the thieves who just robbed a rich *Indiano*, follows a group of black dancers performing a Canary

[247] "*Les Noirs meinent une bonne vie et sont de fidèle nature, faisans volontiers plaisir aux passans, et s'étudient de tout leur pouvoir à se donner tous les plaisirs dequoy ils se peuvent aviser, à se réjouyr en danses, et le plus souvent, en banquets, convis, et ébas de diverses sortes . . . ayans meilleur temps que tout le reste des autres peuples lesquels demeurent en Afrique*." (Leo Africanus 43) Leo Africanus' *Description of Africa* was not translated into Castillian until the twentieth century, but it circulated in early modern Spain in Italian, French, and Latin versions from the 1550s onwards. The Portuguese Francisco Alvarez also noted during his embassy to Abyssinia in the 1520s that Christian Ethiopian masses, unlike Catholic masses, involved dancing: "all this clergy did nothing but sing, dance, and jump, that is to say, leaping upwards." (Alvarez 261)

[248] "*Los negros eran tratados con benignidad desde los tiempos de don Henrique Tercero, permitiéndoles juntarse a sus bailes y fiestas en los días feriados, con que acudían gustosos al trabajo y toleraban mejor el cautiverio*" (Zúñiga 374).

[249] "*Santa Maria la Blanca en cuya placetilla suele juntarse infinidad de negros y negras*" (Cervantes, "*los mirones*" 229). Alfredo Rodríguez López-Vázquez argues that this *entremés* was written circa 1615, in "Cervantes y el entremés de 'los mirones': bases objetivas para su atribución." *Etiópicas*, vol. 7, 2011, pp. 57-63.

dance in the streets of Grenade, without realizing that those dancers are the thieves in blackface: "I'm following them, because I'm enjoying this" [*Yo me voy tras ellos / que gusto me dan*] (Aguado, "platillo" 230).

In 1611, Sebastián de Covarrubias, in *El Tesoro de la lengua castellana*, defined the word *guineo* thus: "the *guineo*, or *negro* from Guinea, is a certain dance with quick and hurried movements; it may be that it was brought from Guinea and *negros* were the first to dance it, or it may come from the Greek verb *kineo*, to move, because of the agility and rapidity of this dance" (Covarrubias 458).[250] Imagining a Greek origin for *guineo,* Covarrubias sees in black dances an incarnation of the kinetic principle itself. His uncertainties about the authenticity of *guineo* as an African dance speak to the fact that Spanish black dances, born in the multicultural slave-owning region of Andalusia from interracial contacts and frictions, were Creole dances performed by a heterogeneous group of Afro-diasporic people coming from different cultures with different dance traditions, and often under the gaze of white observers enraptured with black moves. Lope de Vega too seems to consider black dances as Creole Andalusian creations masquerading under authentic African guise in the last minutes of *La limpieza non manchada* (1624) when the allegory of Ethiopia comes on stage to pay homage to Spain with a "*baile de negros*" that presents Ethiopian "parties and merriments," and Spain interrupts: "Although you come under a disguise, / I recognize you, Andalusia!" (Lope, *limpieza* 216).[251] Specialists consider *guineo* as an umbrella term for a variety of dances with exotic names (*zarambeque, paracumbé, ye-ye, cachumba, gurumbe,* etc.), and they take *guineo* as the model that black dances [*danzas de*

[250] "*Guineo, o el negro de Guinea es una cierta danza de movimientos prestos y apresurados; pudo ser fuesse trayda de Guinea, y que la danzassen primero los negros, y puede ser nombre griego del verbo kineo, moveo, incitor, por la agilidad y presteza de la danza.*" (Covarrubias 458)

[251] "*Aunque disfrazada vengas,/ te conozco, Andaluzia.*" (Lope, *limpieza* 216).

negros] drew upon, both in street processions and in *comedias*.[252] Understanding *guineo* more as a style of movement than a precisely codified dance allows us to move beyond issues of labels and focus on reconstructing this choreographic style as much as possible, collecting information from different sites of performance.

For José Luis Navarro García, "the most representative movements of *guineo,* executed on a very fast-paced rhythm consisted in moving the hips with the body completely leaning forward" (Navarro García 91). Indeed, in *Premática del tiempo,* Francisco de Quevedo describes *guineo* as "leaning the whole body excessively, dangerously, and revoltingly" (Quevedo, "Premática" 532), [253] and Sebastián de Villaviciosa's *entremés de los sones* describes *zarambeque* as the dance that "leaps, dives, and skips more than all the sounds of guitar" Villaviciosa 137).[254] In a culture in which the aristocratic upper body was to remain perfectly still and vertical while only the legs moved, such choreographies were marked as extremely lower class (Brooks, "Text and Image" 55). Moreover, those gestures are indicative of controlled patterns of balance loss and recovery foreign to most European dance traditions, playful shifts in gravity center location, and great energy. Contracts between the city of Seville and the dancing masters for Corpus Christi indicate that processional *guineo* dancers, performing in group, wore bells on their shins, which multiplied the importance of precisely synchronized fast-paced leg movements, for those bells usually mingled with "hollers, Moorish tambourines, guitars, and

[252] In the absence of extant choreographic information in the municipal archives of Seville, Lynn M. Brooks poses that *guineo* inspired the "compositional framework and movement style" used in the *danzas de negros* of Corpus Christi processions (Brooks *Seville* 226). Similarly, although the name of the dance performed during the black ball scene in *La vitoria de la honra* is not specified by Lope de Vega, Marcella Trambaioli assumes that it is a *guineo* (Trambaioli 1779).

[253] "*Haciendo el Guineo, inclinando con notable peligro y asco todo el cuerpo demasiado*" (Quevedo, "Premática" 532).

[254] "*El zarambeque que salta,/ pica y brinca mas que todos / los sones de la guitarra.*" (Villaviciosa 137)

timbrels."[255] To make the bells on their shins ring rhythmically, the dancers must have jumped, stamped, and performed movements reserved for the lower class (Brooks, "Text and Image" 56).

The routine of Madrid-based Afro-Spanish dancer Francisco Meneses included "putting on a lot of bells" and "going out pulling a thousand different faces and dancing the *guineo*" (*Jácara* 2).[256] Making such faces was not unique to Meneses: Fernando Palatín notes that *guineo* contained "violent movements and ridiculous gestures" (Palatín 68). The hilarity that a *zarambeque* performance elicits from an embedded female spectator in Francisco Lanini's *Entremés del colegio de los gorrones* leaves no doubt as to the efficacy of those "ridiculous gestures" (Lanini 19v-20r). During the *fiestas* celebrating the king's presence in Tortosa in December 1585, a confraternity presented eight performers in blackface who would "stick their tongues out and give the finger in order to make viewers laugh" (Cotarelo CLXXIV).[257] The priapic nature of those gestures (especially the latter) signals that sexuality most probably informed the vocabulary of black dances generally: "leaning forward completely" and "moving the hips," for instance, could easily read in sexual terms, especially when those gestures were performed by women. Evocative for us of modern Afro-diasporic dances such as twerking, those movements unequivocally sexualized black dancers in Spaniards' eyes. This explains why the *Diccionario de autoridades* mentions in 1734 that *guineo* features "gestures that are ridiculous and indecent." Not surprisingly, Luis Vélez de Guevara attributes the invention of this indecent

[255] "*Salen con grande grita negros, y negras con adufes, guitarras, y sonajas"* (Lope, *vitoria* 184r).

[256] "*Le puso de cascaveles / un remate y con esto / salio hacienzo mil visage s/ con la danca del guineo*." (*Jácara* 2)

[257] "*O sacaban la lengua, o echaban higas para mover a los que estaban presente al riso*" (Cotarelo CLXXIV). I translate "*echar higas*" as "to give the finger" for purposes of clarity, but the *Diccionario de autoridades* specifies that this action is done with a closed fist, consisting in showing the tip of the thumb between the index and the major, in order to show awkward or infamous people, or to mock and despise them. This is the same movement that the young movement possessed by the devil makes at the black saint in *El Santo negro* (Lope, *Santo negro* 217v).

dance to *el diablo cojuelo,* the Limping Devil himself (Vélez de Guevara, *El diablo* 5v).

Paul Scolieri has shown that, in early modern Spain, "dancing was a viable way to negotiate perceptions of social, cultural, and religious differences in an ever-expanding world," and he demonstrated how those negotiations, after affecting the Moors, started affecting New World Indians in early modern Spanish eyes (Scolieri 14). Black Afro-diasporic people too, I argue, must be inscribed in that long history of Spanish interracial choreographic negotiations. *Guineo,* or Creole metropolitan black dances, developed in Spain in the Southern region of Andalusia where Sub-Saharan Africans had been used as domestic slaves in urban areas since the late fifteenth century. Early modern *danzas de negros*, the enthusiasm for, and the cross-racial performance of black dances, are indissolubly tied to the growth of black slavery, as Alonso de Sandoval suggests, when he writes in 1627 that Cham "was born laughing, and it seems that his sons have inherited that laughter, for even in their terrible condition as slaves, they always go laughing, singing, drumming, and dancing" (Sandoval, *De Instauranda* 26).[258] Early modern Spanish black dances speak to and about slavery.

Afro-Spaniards used *guineo* to contest and re-negotiate their own condition as slaves. One of the ways of conceptualizing slavery is to think of it as a mobility issue—taking the word mobility in its most capacious sense. Afro-Spanish slaves were subjected to forced mobility as they were transported to the Peninsula, and to forced immobility after they had been purchased. This immobility, which crystallizes in the image of shackles, was experienced by slaves on a daily basis as forced confinement to specific locations determined by the master, and as a paucity of options for achieving any degree of social advancement. Spanish society thus limited slaves'

[258] "*Salió al mundo riendo se (risa que parece heredaron sus hijos, pues aun el lo terrible de su esclavitud, siempre se andan riendo, cantando, tañendo, y bailando)"* (Sandoval, *De Instauranda* 26).

movements both horizontally and vertically. Tirso de Molina's interlude *El negro* (1635), which I discussed at length in Chapter 3, captures the linkage between dance and horizontal mobility for Afro-Spaniards. While Domingo spends the whole interlude trying to get musicians to play a danceable tune, and eventually graces the stage with his black dance, his mere presence in the streets of Madrid at night (which was forbidden to slaves both in Madrid and Seville and very harshly punished) manifests his willingness to break the law and move freely around the city.[259] Domingo's desire for dance encodes, at a more fundamental level, his fearless desire for self-determined mobility.

Dance was not only a symbolic way of reclaiming mobility for Afro-Spaniards, it was a concrete way of doing so. Some slaves could make enough money dancing to buy their own freedom from their masters. That was the case for Francisco Meneses, a black dancer [*bailarin moreno*] from Madrid whose story was recorded in a 1687 broadsheet ballad [*jácara*].[260] Bought by a tavern owner, the "mischievious" Francisco got drunk on his master's wine one day, and when his master started beating him, he pleaded:

I will pay you, master

All that I cost you

If you let me walk freely

[259] On policies regarding black mobility in Seville, see Isidoro Moreno Navarro. *La antigua hermandad de los negros de Sevilla: etnicidad, poder y sociedad en 600 años de historia.* Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla: Consejería de Cultura de la Junta de Andalucía, 1997, pp. 72-73.

[260] While there is no other record that attests to Meneses's existence, this specific ballad, by giving this black man a name, by dating and by locating precisely the events of his life, conveys a sense of historical truth. Even if this sense of historical truth were to prove false, it is crucial to note that the existence of a free professional black dancer was common enough to be verisimilar for early modern Spanish readers.

And dance throughout the city. (*Jácara* 2)[261]

The master accepts, and Francisco dances the *guineo* throughout the city's streets:

He would enter taverns,

And if there was any piper there

He did not only get wine,

But also money. (Ibid.)[262]

Francisco dances so well and so much that he earns enough money to buy his own freedom:

He gave the master two *reales*

Everyday, so that when he got

His free papers, he left,

Dancing from town to town. (Ibid.) [263]

Meneses thus starts a professional dancing career as a free man. But the story does not end there. Capturing the potential of black dances for political emancipation in the hands of Afro-Spaniards, the ballad also captures white perceptions of this push for black mobility as a threat to the established order, and manifests an impulse to shut it down. Indeed, the ballad manipulates the most basic, yet perhaps deepest, white fantasies about blackness, by turning Francisco's triumphant mobility into an unchecked destructive libidinal drive. Reaching Ciudad Real as a free man, Francisco sees a peasant girl, "his blood turned/ and he followed her, dancing and drumming" [*Alteróse la sangre/ y fue danzando y tañendo/ tras ella*] (*Jácara* 3). The girl runs

[261] *"Yo te pagaré señor/ todo el caudal que te cuesto/ con que me dejes andar / baylando por todo el pueblo."* (*Jácara* 2)

[262] "*Entravase en las tavernas/ y si hallaba algun gaytero/ no solo el vino tomaba/ sino ganava dinero."* (Ibid.)

[263] *"Dava al amo cada dia/ dos reales, con que en teniendo/ la carta de horro se fue/ baylando de pueblo en pueblo."* (Ibid.)

away, but the athletic dancer runs faster:

> The shepherdess runs a lot
>
> But her breath was short
>
> For the Ethiop was fast as lightning
>
> And he had a flaming volcano inside of him. (*Jácara* 3)[264]

The interracial rape scene culminates with murder, and Francisco is arrested, his movement interrupted, his mobility abruptly stopped. He is jailed and hanged. With the last image of the black dancer's corpse hanged and immobile, or more precisely, immobilized [*con eso quedó colgado*], the ballad advertises what happens to Afro-diasporic people who claim too much horizontal and vertical mobility in late seventeenth century Spanish society.

His tragic end notwithstanding, Francisco Meneses was not an isolated case. There were many professional Afro-Spanish dancers. To the point that Sevillian dancing master Juan de Esquivel Navarro, in his *Discursos sobre el arte del danzado* (1642) bitterly laments the competition that "a great number of *negros*" [*tanta cantitad de negros*] represent in the city for men of his profession (Esquivel Navarro 24).[265] While we know that the black dances of Corpus Christi processions were sometimes performed by white dancers in blackface, evidence suggests that Afro-Spanish dancers might also have been employed on those occasions.[266] Hernando de

---

[264] *"Corre mucho la pastora/ mas era corto su aliento/ que era el Etiope un rayo,/ y lleva un volcan de fuego."* (*Jácara* 3)

[265] In his novella *El celoso extremeño*, Cervantes confirms the presence of black professionals in the world of music and dance in Seville, when a character, posing as a white musician declares: "I teach black and poor people how to drum: I have already taught three *negros*, slaves of the city's important officials, so well that they can sing and drum in any ball and any tavern, and they have paid me well for it" [*Enseño a tañer a algunos morenos y a otra gente pobre; y ya tengo tres negros, esclavos de tres veinticuatros, a quien he enseñado de modo que pueden cantar y tañer en cualquier baile y en cualquier taberna, y me lo han pagado muy rebién*] (Cervantes, *El Celoso* 143r).

[266] Lynn M. Brooks cites an account of the 1617 feast for the Immaculate Conception in Seville evidencing the use of blackface in religious street procession dances: "The negroes were whites made into blacks with such shining face" (Brooks, *Seville* 164). The contracts preserved in the city archives in Seville are unfortunately mute on the

Rivera, the dancing master who produced more *danzas de negros* than any other *maestro* hired by the city for Corpus Christi between 1609 and 1639 and who lived and worked in one of the city's black pockets (see Chapter 2), might very well have been one of those black competitors. He might have been Hernando de Rivera, the "*negro captivo de Juan Francisco de Rivera"* who married *"Ysabel de Vega, negra captiva de Maria de la Vega"* in 1601 in the parish of el Salvador, and then, as his contracts with the city indicate, moved, either as a free man or as a *cortado* slave,[267] to the parish of San Esteban, whose records register the death of an infant, "a little boy, son of Hernando de Rivera," in 1610. Rivera disappears from the city's records in 1640 after thirty years of nearly uninterrupted service, which suggests that he might have died then.[268] If Rivera was black, most probably, so were the dancers he hired. Theatrical culture itself registers the participation of Afro-Spaniards in street procession dances: in the 1640 *mojiganga El registrador,* playwright Juan de Quiros has the Sevillian *alcalde* in charge of organizing the *autos* for Corpus Christi go from door to door, in order to have the locals participate: he enlists a black woman to dance the *zarambeque* (qtd. in Moreno Muñoz 379).

Dance also empowered Afro-Spanish communities by empowering the black

---

question of the performers' ethnicity in *danzas de negros* of the Corpus Christi processions: while they painstakingly detail the clothes that black characters were to wear, they do not contain any reference to make-up. Yet there is no reason why the practices of racial impersonation used for the 1617 Immaculate Conception feast should have been limited to that celebration, and, as Brooks notes, the first recorded account of the city commissioning an Afro-Spanish dancer, Juan Antonio de Castro, dates back to 1693 (Brooks, *Seville* 279).

[267] "*Cortado*" slaves, rather than working directly for their master, would offer their services to third parties, receive a salary for the work done for those third parties, and give part of that salary to their master. *Cortado* slaves had more autonomy than non-*cortado* slaves, and more opportunities to earn enough money to buy their own freedom.

[268] I formulate this biographical hypothesis based on my own findings in various Sevillian archives. I have consulted the following documents: *Marriage record for Hernando Rivera*. *Bodas: 1601-1609,* AGAS Fundo paroquial del Salvador, I, 2, 1, Libro 06. Biblioteca Colombina; "Contract between the city council and Hernando Rivera." *Archivo de Contaduría y Junta de Propios*, Sección II, Carpeta 2, documento 24*,* 1622. Archivo Municipal de Sevilla; and "Death certificate of Hernando de Rivera's son." Libro 1, 1609, f.169. San Esteban Parish. Thanks go to Nazario Aguilar Montes, the remarkable volunteer archivist of San Esteban church, who has painstakingly entered the data of his voluminous parish records into a digital catalogue, and who let me access that catalogue.

confraternities. Isidoro Moreno Navarro notes that black confraternities often integrated dance into their own processional moves.[269] The extant archives of the *hermandad de los negritos* in Seville, which start in 1641, regularly include costs for hiring musicians on the occasion of various celebrations.[270] They leave no doubt as to the importance of music (and by extension dancing) in the life of a confraternity that was "essential for the black community," providing "shelter in case of need, a space for expression that was more adapted to the culture of blacks, and a vector for black people that gave them a certain visibility and reinforced their cohesion as a way to prevent their disintegration and promote their rights" (Martín-Casares and Delaigue 235). Ethnic confraternities such the *hermandad de los negritos* in Seville defended the interests of the black community, and this mission was made publicly visible, almost advertised, by the horizontal and vertical mobility that the black confraternity claimed as it moved throughout the streets of Seville, participating in Holy week processions on equal footing with white confraternities.[271]

In that sense, the 1604 attack led by the powerful confraternity of *Nuestra Señora de la Antigua Siete Dolores* on the modest black confraternity's right to take part in the procession— which was not resolved until 1625, when the Pope himself ruled in favor of the black confraternity— was an attack on what was probably the strongest symbol of early modern black

[269] For instance, the black confraternity of the Andalusian city of Jaén celebrated the Epiphany in great pomp, and, at the end of a solemn mass, had a dance performed in front of their icon: "after a few dance steps within the church, the images went out in a procession preceded by the dancers and the banners . . . the same procession was repeated for Corpus Christi." (Moreno Navarro 55). Moreno Navarro also connects some costs recorded in the registers of the Sevillian black confraternity for repairing "jingles" in the early seventeenth century to this kind of dances (Moreno Navarro 54).

[270] Records prior to 1641 were destroyed when the black confraternity's seat was flooded at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Thanks go to Alfredo Montilla Carvajal for letting me access the archive of the *hermandad*.

[271] As we know from Luis Góngora's poem "*En la fiesta del Santísimo Sacramento*" (1609), the spectators for those processions included Afro-Spaniards who were probably allowed to move freely in the city on those occasions.

mobility (see Chapter 3). The authorities' distrust of black confraternities seems to have extended throughout the empire, as suggested by a 1612 royal letter sent to the *real audiencia* of Santo Domingo, Hispaniola, in order to inquire into the existence of a black confraternity there. The confraternity *de Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria* in question was most probably involved in the "various games and inventions" [*diversos juegos y invenciones*], including black dances, that accompanied Corpus Christi processions in Santo Domingo, which the locals relished. The Spanish crown seemed anxious "to know what this confraternity is, who founded it, on whose permission, how many people join there," moreover, "should there be another such confraternity" the Real Audiencia was to inform the crown "in great detail, and to advise whether those confraternities might be inconvenient."[272] In short, authorities in Madrid, Seville, and Santo Domingo, were wary of black confraternities' push for mobility. For those confraternities, dance was simultaneously a symbol—i.e. a vivid reclaiming of mobility and collective agency—and a public relation asset, for who did not love black dance providers in early modern Spain?

Finally, the systemic pairing of black dances with the motif of black weddings in early modern Spanish literature conveys a general awareness that black dances were a concrete and symbolical way of reclaiming physical, geographic, and social mobility for Afro-Spaniards.[273] Indeed, although marriage did not lead to freedom,

---

[272] "*Quiero saber que cofradia es esta, quien la fundo y con que orden y licencia, y que numero se junta ysi hay otra alguna de negro os mando que en la primera occasion me informese de todo muy particularmente, avisandome si se os ofrece inconveniente en que las aya*." SANTO_DOMINGO, 868, L.2, F.322V. On the popularity of Corpus Christi celebrations in Santo Domingo, see SANTO_DOMINGO, 868, L.2, F.322V. *Archivo de Indias*, Seville.

[273] Examples of this pairing include Francisco de Quevedo's poem "*Bodas de negros*" (1626), Francisco Avellaneda's interlude *Bayle entremesado de los negros*, several wedding-themed *danzas de negros* performed in the Sevillian Corpus Christi processions such as "*La boda de la Gatatumba*" (1604) by Hernando Franco, "*La boda del rey de Guinea*" (1609) by Miguel Jeronimo Punzón, and "*El casamiento del rey Bamba*" (1645), by Ana de Medina (Sentaurens 1176-1179), as well as the anonymous ballad *Nueva relación y curioso romance, en que se refiere la celebridad, galanteo y acaso de una Boda de Negros,* which I close read in this chapter.

> Marriage was understood as a previous step to freedom, since the Church was favorable to the idea that married slaves should spend some time together (usually two or three days a week), and it also urged their masters not to sell couples separately . . . Understandably, marriage could be seen by slaves as a way to resist their situation and improve their status. (Martín-Casares and Delaigue 230)

Not surprisingly then, black weddings were seen as negative occasions in Spanish social imagination, which translated into the use of the phrase "*boda de negros*" [*negros'* wedding] as a metaphor synonymous with chaos. In 1618, the Sevillian Juan de Mal Lara explained that metaphor in the following terms: "whoever pays attention to what happens when *negros* get married will see how much noise they make, how much they talk, and how little they understand one another" (Mal Lara 182).[274] The association of black dances with what was then a synonym for chaos (black weddings) bears witness to the perceived disruptive nature of black dances.

The most notable pairing of black weddings and black dances as a medium for slaves to re-negotiate the terms of their condition takes place in Simón Aguado's interlude *Los negros*, which was created in Granada in 1602. In *Los negros*, Master Rubio's black slave, Gasparillo—who, as Rubio tells us, "knows how to drum, dance, sing, and dance, and a thousand other graces" [*sabe tañer, y bailar, y cantar, y danzar y otras mil gracias*]—is in love with master Ruiz's slave, Dominga, and he wants to marry her. The rapacious masters, however, are displeased that their slaves should spend so much time courting each other away from their households. Yet they can't agree on who should sell his slave to the other, as both of them want to own the children that Gasparillo and Dominga will surely have. As a result, they decide to

[274] "*Quien ha bien mirado lo que pasa quando los negros se casan, vera el ruydo que traen, lo mucho que hablan, y lo poco que se entienden*" (Mal Lara 182).

force the slaves to terminate their relationship. But Gasparillo and Dominga resist, and as the masters threaten to use violence to punish them, the slaves appease them with black music: "Let's #play, and #sing, for this way we #can appease their #wrath" [*Toquemo y cantemo,que desa manera le habemon de aplacar la cólicas*] (Aguado, "los negros" 232).[275] They sing and dance, and, as Edward J. Mullen observes, in that "song/dance sequence, they re-state their message of defiance, but this time through the medium of music—a form that allows them greater artistic and intellectual freedom than direct discourse" (Mullen 239). When master Ruiz enters the stage with a burning hot hatchet in order to punish Dominga for her insolence, the masters' wives intervene, stop them, and, worthy champions of church and family values that they are, force their husbands to consent to the slaves' marriage. Ruiz and his wife desire to be godfathers, protectors of the wedding, but Gasparillo and Dominga refuse: they already have chosen a godfather and godmother [*no, no siolo, nosotros tenemos padronos y mandronas*] (Aguado, "los negros" 233), which allows them to limit white involvement, however benevolent, in their wedding. The interlude ends with a big celebratory wedding black dance: "enter all the *negros* possible in an orderly fashion, dancing a saraband, with timbrels and jingles, and they come and go across the stage" (Aguado, "los negros" 234).[276] In other words, the slaves win: they get permission to wed each other and thus to leave their masters' houses regularly. The spectacular black dance celebrates their regained mobility.

Aguado's interlude presents a much more positive take on black weddings and the black dances associated with them than the anonymous ballad *Nueva relación y curioso romance, en*

[275] Hash symbols indicate the phonetic distortions of blackspeak. I explain this translation choice in footnote #185.

[276] "*Van entrando todos los negros que puedan en orden, danzando la zarabanda, con tamboriles y sonajas, y dan una vuelta al teatro*" (Aguado, "los negros" 234). While the saraband is a dance of Moorish inspiration, not a *guineo* or another *danza de negros* defined as such, it is here performed by black dancers, and its moves could easily have been infused with choreographic language lifted from *danzas de negros* traditions.

que se refiere la celebridad, galanteo y acaso de una Boda de Negros, que se executó en la Ciudad del Puerto de Sta. Maria—which probably dates back to the beginning of the eighteenth century (Martín-Casares and Barranco, "Black African Weddings" 114). In this ballad, Tomás and Lucía are getting married in their Andalusian hometown of Puerto de Santa Maria, and invite "all the *negros* /of Cadiz, San Lucar,/ Xerez, Rota, and Puerto" (*Nueva relación* 1) to celebrate with them around a delicious banquet they have carefully prepared. After the religious ceremony,

> The reception took place
>
> And before dinner, they started
>
> Playing music instruments,
>
> Dancing tap dance,
>
> Minuets in the Guinean fashion
>
> And the Congolese chain dance. (*Nueva relación* 2-3)[277]

During those merriments, four young white men steal all the food prepared for the wedding feast. This larceny seems to punish the Afro-Spanish newlyweds for daring to claim ownership over their own bodies and mobility by getting married, dancing, and, even more importantly, dancing behind closed doors, denying white Spaniards access to the enrapturing sight of their bodies in motion. The newly weds get a triple punishment. First, their wedding feast is ruined, for there is no food left. Second, white Spaniards are granted access to the sight of the newly-weds' dancing bodies against the latter's wish, to the extent that the ballad's print version provides an illustration of the black wedding dance (Fig.14). Third, the denouement of the ballad condemns them to perpetual motionlessness. Indeed, once the black party finds out about the larceny, they

[277] "*Despues de las oraciones,/ Se hizo el recebimiento/ Y antes de cenar empiezan/ A tocar los instrumentos,/ A baylar zapateados/ Minuetes a lo Guineo,/ Y la Cadena de Congo*." (*Nueva relación* 2-3)

try to pursue the thieves in the streets, and are immobilized as they do so: the groom falls down the staircase and breaks his leg, while the bride, having a nervous breakdown, is put to bed and made to drink a burning hot toxic concoction by an incompetent barber. The concoction burns her insides and makes her eject part of her own intestines [*habia arrojado parte de tripas*] — the poor bride dies lying down in her own guts (*Nueva relación* 4). In short, for reclaiming their mobility and dancing out their victory, the black newly-weds are punished through a poetic justice informed by the dominant racial ideology of the time. For white Spanish readers, of course, this denouement must have read as comic and burlesque.

How can we account for the ideological discrepancy between Aguado's triumphant interlude and this ballad? At least two hypotheses come to mind. The first one factors in the difference in genre between Aguado's interlude and the anonymous ballad. Aguado's *entremés* was created in Granada, an important Andalusian city, and I agree with John Beusterien that the stage direction "as many *negros* as possible" suggests that real Afro-Spanish dancers might have been employed, if not to perform the leading parts of Gasparillo and Dominga, at least to perform this final black dance (Beusterien 102). The difference in genre between ballads such as the Puerto de Santa Maria *relación,* or the *jacará* of Francisco Meneses, texts primarily meant to be read, and Simón Aguado's *entremés*, primarily meant to be performed—and performed at least in part by Afro-Spaniards—informs their respective takes on the question of black mobility expressed through dance. While white anxieties regarding black claims of mobility express themselves easily in the written medium, when politically charged and fraught black dances are performed on stage by Afro-Spaniards, they are so gripping, the audience is so "enraptured," that black dancers will neither be condemned nor punished. In that sense, the experience of watching a black dance is an experience of disempowerment for early modern white spectators, which

adds a layer of complexity to the ambivalent power dynamics inherent in black dances. Indeed, black dances are a means of self-assertion for early modern black communities on a symbolic level, on a material level (allowing Afro-Spanish dancers such as Francisco Meneses to buy their own freedom, and ingratiating black confraternities with hostile white communities), but also, importantly, on an affective level. Black dances performed live by Afro-Spaniards captured the audience's sympathy, as the Andalusian black confraternities knew full well.

The second hypothesis (which is compatible with the first one) factors in the time lapse between Aguado's interlude and the anonymous ballad: it is possible, if not likely, that colonial developments in the Spanish Americas strengthened the anxiogenic dimension of the already fraught practice of *guineo* dancing throughout the seventeenth century. Indeed, while the Spanish empire hardly expanded in the seventeenth century, struggling, rather, to maintain its dominion over American territories and to defend its integrity against English, French, and Dutch encroachments, colonial cultural productions started reaching the metropole in the first decades of the century. Those productions (such as Sandoval's *De instauranda aethiopum salute*, for instance) came from regions where black slavery fell under the plantation paradigm and had little to do any longer with Andalusian domestic slavery. Thus, colonial versions of black dance informed by the plantation economy found their way to the metropole in the form of images such as the Dutch Zacharias Wagener's 1640 painting of a *Calenda* dance on a Brazilian plantation (Fig.15). Wagener's picturesque rendition of the movements of *Calenda* are in line with the all the *guineo* descriptions we have encountered before, and the note that he attached to the image clearly inscribes this dance in the economy of plantation slavery: "when the slaves have carried out their arduous duties for weeks on end, they are allowed to celebrate one Sunday as they please; in large numbers in certain places and with all manner of leaps, drums, and flutes, they

dance from morning to night, all in a disorganized way" (qtd. in Mills et al. 164). Colonial versions of black dance were also vehicled by Afro-diasporic slaves who were brought from the empire to the metropole, such as the black protagonist of Gil Lopez de Armesto's *entremés Los nadadores de Sevilla y de Triana* (1674), who, transported from Lima to Seville, tricks gullible white Sevillians into granting him what he wants, and celebrates his victory with a triumphant interracial dance. In short, the increasing volume of exchanges between the metropole and the colonies probably enhanced old metropolitan anxieties about self-emancipating dancing black bodies in the second half of the seventeenth century.

3) Dancing Like a Beast: French *Mauresque, Canarie,* and *Caprioles*

The debasing sexualizing dimension of Spanish *danzas de negros* has affinities with the animalizing dimension of black dances that developed in early seventeenth century France. This section analyzes the mechanisms through which the French tradition racialized black bodies.

Let us first consider the case of the French *mauresque* dance. Although the original *morisca* dance was not considered as a Sub-Saharan dance in the Spanish culture where it probably originated,[278] throughout the sixteenth century, it increasingly became perceived as a

[278] Although little is known for sure about the *mauresque* to the extent that the label encompassed widely different dances in different regions of early modern Europe, making its origin a vexing question, it seems that the *mauresque* was initially based upon authentic dances performed by the Spanish *moriscos*. Those dances spread in the late Middle Ages throughout Western Europe. Although Moorishness and blackness sometimes overlapped in pre-seventeenth century Spanish perceptions, *morisca* dances and black dances were distinct in Spanish performance culture: they were different enough to be treated differently by the law. Luis de Marmol Carvajal reports in 1600 that, in 1566, the *morisco* leader Francisco Nuñez Muley protested in the name of his people against the Spanish ban on *morisco* dances, especially the *zambra*. He did so by pointing out that even *negros*, "the vilest and basest people in the world" were allowed to "speak, drum, and dance in their own language" under the king's law. [*¿Que gente hay en el mundo mas vil y baja que los negros de Guinea? Y consiénteseles hablar, tañer, y bailar en su lengua, por darles contento*] (Marmol Carvajal 165). German iconographic sources suggest that *morisco* dancing was not always perceived as a black dance in continental Europe. Indeed, in his *Trachtenbuch*, created between 1530 and 1540, Christoph Weiditz illustrates the *mauresque* danced by *moriscos* from Spain, and the difference in skin tone, features, and habit between the *morisco* dancers and the chained black slaves in another illustration clearly dissociates black slaves from *morisco* dancers. Similarly, a late fifteenth century illustration by Israel van

black dance in the French and English cultures that absorbed and transformed it.[279] Thoinot Arbeau in *Orchésographie* (1596) defines "*morisque*" as a slightly obsolete thumping-based male dance performed in blackface by "a boy with his face smeared and blackened, with white or yellow taffeta around his forehead, and bells on his shins" (Arbeau 94).[280] McGowan notes:

> *Mauresques* are sometimes performed by local youths … but most often, they are performed by professional dancers: those dances, extremely vigorous and spectacular, entailed jumps, caprioles, and breathtakingly virtuosic acrobatics … The dancer must have an exceptional technique and be aware of his own virtuosity. The dancer must know the rules of dancing well enough to put them aside to dance off beat, for instance. (McGowan, *Danse à la Renaissance* 39)[281]

Mauresque thus required endurance and virtuosity, and it associated such prowess with black skin. In 1538, Strasbourg bakers danced a *mauresque* throughout the city, "they were all painted black like the Moors, and had black painted caps on" (qtd. in Locke 117). Similarly, records from 1530s Siena, Italy, refer to *moresca* as "a dance in the Ethiopian style" [*un ballo a uso di Etiopia*] (D'Accone 645). This social dance found its way into court ballets such as the *ballet de*

Meckenem identified by McGowan as a *mauresqu*e dance does not feature blackface or any attempt at rendering a black origin. Similarly, the famous series of ten *Mauresque* dancers that the Munich-based sculptor Erasmus Grasser produced circa 1480 numbers one black-skinned dancer… in the middle of nine white-skinned dancers. The contrast between those dominantly white versions of *morisco* dancing and the blackface based *mauresque* dance described by Arbeau a century later suggests that the blackening of *mauresque* was a late sixteenth century development.

[279] In England, the *morisca* creolized with local May revels tradition and absorbed elements from the legend of Robin Hood to form Morris dancing which was sometimes performed in blackface, but not always. For instance the engraving on the frontispiece of Will Kemp's *Nine Days Wonder* (1600) does not feature blackface, and such cosmetics are not mentioned in Kemp's own account of his routine either.

[280] "*un garcon maschuré et noircy, le front bandé d'un taffetas blanc ou jaune avec des jambières de sonnettes.*" (Arbeau 94)

[281] "*Les mauresques sont parfois executées par les jeunes gens du cru, comme ce sera le cas à Aix et à Marseille en 1516. Mais le plus souvent, ce sont des professionnels qui les exécutent: ces danses, extrêmement vigoureuses et spectaculaires, impliquent en effet la pratique de sauts, de cabrioles, et d'acrobaties d'une virtuosité à couper le souffle*" (McGowan, *Danse à la Renaissance* 39).

la tour de Babel (1627), which, to illustrate the diversity of nations and languages, has two *Mores* dancing the *mauresque* in blackface.[282]

The blackening of *mauresque* in French perceptions entailed an animalization of the dance. For instance, in his *Cosmographie Universelle* (1575), André Thévet comments on the "frisky dancing" of Sub-Saharan women from Senega, and adds that he is "not surprized that in France we call several dances *mauresques,* considering all the monkeying around that they contain" (Thévet 94).[283] Thévet's description resembles other travellers' accounts, such as Peter de Marees's *Description et récit historial du riche royaume d'or de Guinea* (1606). Marees too depicts African women who, when dancing, "exert themselves monkeying around fabulously" (Marees 71-72).[284] But Thévet's rationale also implies that he perceives the *mauresques* performed in France as a form of "monkeying around." Not surprisingly, then, Ingrid Brainard mentions that *mauresque* dancers were sometimes dressed as apes (qtd. in Locke 117).[285]

The same animalization affects another early modern French black dance, the *canarie,* allegedly from the Canary Islands, whose inhabitants were represented as black, and where Iberians first experimented with sugar culture and plantation slavery in the fifteenth century.[286]

---

[282] As we know from Claude-François Ménestrier's 1682 account of ballets costumes, *Mores* in French ballets were unmistakably black, not light-skinned Maghrebi-looking: "Moors have their heir short and frizzy, their face and hands black, they go bare-headed, unless they wear a gold diadem with pearls; they must have earrings." [*Les Mores ont les cheveux courts et crespus, le visage et les mains noires, ils sont teste nue, à moins qu'on ne leur donnât un tourtil greslé de perles en forme de diadème; ils doivent porter des pendants d'oreille.*] (Ménestrier 251-252).

[283] *"Des gestes les plus folastres que vous sçcauriez penser. Je ne m'esbahis pas si encore en France on appellee plusieurs danses les Moresques, veu les singeries qu'ils font en dansant*" (Thévet 94).

[284] "*Elles font des terribles démenées et singeries"* (Marees 71-72).

[285] This leads Ralphe Locke to comment: "The ease with which exotic ethnicity—suggesting Africa and/or the Muslim Middle East—was replaced by beastliness—including, one might imagine, awkward motions and even some grunting—may have carried its own unspoken message about foreigners and their inherent nature" (Locke 117).

[286] On the perception of Canary people as black, see the illustration representing a man from Tenerife in Leo

According to Marin Mersenne, "Canary dance is very difficult and only danced by those who know it well and are light-footed. It entails several kinds of foot beats . . . half-caprioles, half-spins, and other turns both in the air and on the ground" (Mersenne 174).[287] One of those footbeats was the "*rus de vache*"—"the cow's kick"—an extremely rare step consisting in raising one foot laterally, instead of forwards or backwards (as was the norm). According to Arbeau, this step was only used for the *canarie*. For him, *canarie* "moves are lively, and yet, they are strange, odd, and smack of savagery . . . You will learn them from those who know them, and you can invent new ones yourself" (Arbeau 95).[288] With this direction, Arbeau encourages dancers to unleash their imagination and incorporate into the vocabulary of *canarie* whatever they identify as "savage" gestures.

The virtuosic strangeness of the steps found in the social black dances of early modern France, *mauresque* and *canarie*, found its fullest expression in the black dances of burlesque court ballets, a genre particularly popular between 1620 and 1636. Black characters intervene in about two dozens such ballets.[289] The animalistic inspiration behind black social dances in

---

Africanus, *Historial description de l'Afrique,* p. 406. On the development of plantation slavery in the Canary Islands (and other islands such as Madeira), see Lawrence Clayton. "Bartolomé de las Casas and the African Slave Trade." *History Compass,* 7/6 (2009), pp.1526-1541. Baltasar Fra-Molinero is currently working on a large-scale project about slavery in the Canary Islands.

[287] "*La Canarie est grandement difficile et ne se danse que par ceux qui sont très bien instruits dans cet exercice, et qui ont le pied fort prest. Elle est composée de plusieurs batteries de pied . . . et de demi-caprioles, de demi-pirouettes, et d'autres tours tant en l'air et par en haut, que terre à terre"* (Mersenne 174).

[288] "*Lesdits passages sont gaillards et néanmoins étranges, bizarres, et resentent fort le sauvage . . . Vous les apprendrez de ceulx qui les savent et vous pourrez inventer vous-mêmes de nouveaux*" (Arbeau 95).

[289] In the *Ballet de la magnifique duchesse de Dendaye* (1625), for instance, the grotesque duchess of Dendaye [Garlic-Breath] wants to get married. Yet "she does not want to be won by blood but through dance" [*elle ne veut point qu'on l'acquiere par le sang, elle veut qu'on la prévienne par la danse*], and she rejects the king of France and the Great Turk for the king of Ethiopia, who seduces her "through the lovely effects of his turns" [*par les aimables effects de sa double cadence*] ("Dendaye" 83). The excellence of the black king at dancing is confirmed by his countrymen's performances. In the *Ballet de l'almanach ou les prédictions véritables* (1631), the arrival of Summer is represented by four black *Mores:* "Their color could horrify you, but the gentleness of their steps, the diversity of their postures, and their talent for dance, dispelling your aversion for their color, will make you applaud and confess

France is amplified in two ballets for which we have particularly detailed records: the *Ballet de Monseigneur le duc de Vandosme* (1610), and the *Ballet du grand bal de la douairière de Billebahaut* (1626). The *Ballet de Monseigneur le duc de Vandosme* starts with a scene in which Sir Gobbemagne, who governs the Apes' island in the name of the sorceress Alcine, turns into a young *More* with a specific purpose in mind:

> This *More*, having shown his agility as the violin played, went toward the forest with a golden wand in his hand in order to introduce two torch-bearing lackeys dressed as big green apes . . . [Leaving those apes seated with jams and sweets, the *More*] ... caprioled his way back to the forest in order to introduce three other enslaved violin players … Then ten big green apes entered, in pairs. Once they were all entered and aligned … the fifteen violins started playing the ballet of the big green apes, which they danced in ten different ways, always on the beat, with various leaps, gambols, gestures, and grimaces. The *More* was in the middle of them, showing them what to do, and that way, he had them retire in a line into the forest, sometime jumping on one foot, sometimes on the other, and sometimes on both feet at the same time. ("Vandosme" 243-244)[290]

Showing what gestures to make to the big green apes, the *More* shares a body language with them, and that body language (leaps, gambols, gestures, and grimaces) is such an apt description of apish behavior, that it blurs the direction of the mimetic dynamics. That the black *More* should teach apish body language to apes and, even more strikingly, that the old white Sir Gobbemagne should strategically turn into a young black *More* in order to perform that task, strongly suggest

---

that their dance is one of the most pleasant things you have ever seen." ["*Leur couleur basanée et noire pourrait vous donner de l'horreur; mais la gentillesse de leurs pas, la diversité de leurs postures, et la disposition avec laquelle ils danseront, vous ostant toute l'aversion que vous pourriez avoir de cette couleur, vous porteront à un applaudissement et un aveu que leur balet sera une des plus agréables choses que vous avez encore vues]* ("L'Almanach" 153). As late as 1656, the celebrated *Ballet de Psyché* features "Six *Mores* given by Marc Anthony to Cleopatra, who dance with a lot of talent and skill" (Bensérade 432).

[290] "*Lequel More, au son desdits violons, ayant fait quelque tour de souplesse, une baguette dorée en la main, s'en allait vers ladite forêt faire entrer deux pages porte-flambeaux vêtus en Magots verts . . . [les laissant assis avec dragées et confitures, le More] s'en retournant à capriole vers ladite forêt en faisait sortir trois autres violons esclaves . . . Et les dix magots verts porte-flambeaux entraient ensemble deux à deux, puis estans tous entrés et rangés. . . les quinze violons commençaient à sonner ensemble le bal des magots verts, lequel ils dansaient en dix façons, toujours en cadence, avec saults, gambades, gestes et grimasses differentes. Ledit More, étant au milieu d'eux, leur faisant signe de ce qu'ils devaient faire, et en cette façon il les faisait retirer après lui file à file vers la forêt, tantost sautant sur un pied, tantost sur un autre, tantost sur les deux ensemble*." ("Vandosme" 243-244)

that black body language itself contains apish elements to start with. In that sense, the *Ballet de Monseigneur le duc de Vandosme* echoes the perception of Sub-Saharan African dances as "monkeying around" in travel writings by André Thévet or Peter de Marees.

In the *Ballet du grand bal de la douairiere de Billebahaut* (1626), the animalization of black dances is suggested by the costume of the black African king, the "*Grand cacique*," who comes to pay homage to the Dowager of Billebahaut on the occasion of her grotesque wedding. While there is no extant choreographic information for this ballet, the costume of the black king, which Daniel Rabel fortunately recorded in his detailed illustrations of the ballet, is suggestive of particular kinetic tensions. The king enters on an artificial elephant, a machine conveying the heaviness of the pachyderm (Fig.7). McGowan depicts him as "A massive black figure, with a tusk-like white beard, dressed in a spiked gold tunic and red cloak" (McGowan, *Court Ballet* #75). McGowan's observation that the king's beard is "tusk-like" likens the dancer to his monumental elephant. Meanwhile, the shape of his gold tunic and red cloak strongly evokes gigantic feathers, turning the king into a human-sized exotic firebird (Fig.16).[291] The tension between the heaviness of the elephant and the lightness of the firebird was likely to permeate the king's choreographic language, resulting in steps "lively, yet strange, odd, and smacking of savagery," in Arbeau's words. The dancer probably drew imaginatively on the energy of the bird and the elephant to devise his own movements, performing blackness by animalizing his own gestures.

Inspired by kicking cows, flying birds, stomping elephants, and apes "monkeying around," French black dances racialized Africans by giving them a liminal position on the

[291] Of course, the use of the term "cacique," which comes from the Americas, to refer to an African king is intriguing. I believe, in this case, that the association of Indian culture with feathers in visual culture explains, to a large extent why Rabel perceived this feathered African king as a cacique.

fringes on mankind. Movements were routinely essentialized in a culture that believed, in the words of late seventeenth century dance theorist Claude-François Ménestrier, that "ballet expresses movements that painting and sculpture can't, and doing so, it expresses the very nature of things and the soul's habits, which can only be apprehended by the senses through those movements" (Ménestrier 41).[292] Black dances construed black "souls' habits" as animalistic in the French early modern public spheres. French black dances, by assimilating black body language with animal body language, routinely downgraded Sub-Saharan Africans and Afro-diasporic people on the Great Chain of Being in the first decades of the seventeenth century.

4) Aristocratic Appropriations: Black Dances At Court Across the Channel

In this section, I further examine the integration of black dances into burlesque court performances in France—but also in England—at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and I read those performances in the light of the power dynamics at the heart of Spanish *danzas de negros* traditions. I show that, in an attempt at power play, European aristocrats appropriated black dances in order to contest various aspects of royal authority that they experienced as bondage. French burlesque court performances capture the status of black dances as a medium for re-negotiating power relations in the context of slavery. In France, male aristocrats repeatedly used black dances to criticize the King's attack on their traditional prerogatives; in England, I suggest, Queen Anne might have used black dances in ways that rejected a strand of Jamesian ideology built upon the intersectional oppression of white women and racial others.

[292] "*Le ballet exprime les mouvements que la peinture et la sculpture ne sauraient exprimer, et par ces mouvements, il va jusqu'à exprimer la nature des choses et les habitudes de l'âme, qui ne peuvent tomber sous les sens que par ces mouvements*" (Ménestrier 41). For an exploration of this belief both in humanist writings and in the writings of dance masters, see Jennifer Nevile, *The Eloquent Body: Dance and Humanist Culture in Fifteenth Century Italy*, Indiana University Press, 2004, pp. 91-92.

Relying upon Margaret McGowan's periodization of the French burlesque ballet era as 1620-1636, James Franko defines the burlesque ballet as "an attempt to establish a legibility for dance independent of verbal means" (Franko 5), a deeply politicized practice, in which dancing aristocrats tried to emancipate themselves from the yoke of the crown by having their bodies emancipate themselves from text and textuality, that old "metaphor for autocratic power" (Franko 6) that had traditionally informed the esthetics of ballet since the 1580s. In that sense, "burlesque ballet represented a form of veiled protest in its curious autonomy, and an obvious critique through its satire" (Franko 11)."The most satiric of burlesque ballets were in dialogue with the monarch and society at large over nobiliary rights versus royal power" (Franko 69). Franko devotes only a couple of pages to the case of the *Mores galants* characters, but those are strongly suggestive. About the *ballet de Monseigneur le Prince* (1622), for instance, where M. le Duc d'Alvin states "A sun gave me his law; its fire burns me, and I adore him," Franko argues that "the Moor is pictured as blackened by his adoration for the king" due to the use of the sun imagery at court, and he adds that "the most politically critical, and therefore obviously satiric, motifs of burlesque ballets are enveloped in racial, class, and gender cross dressing" (Franko 70). In other words, what I described in Chapter 1 as the systematic submission of black characters to the authority of the French king and/or to the living allegories of France that are the aristocratic women in the audience within the erotic hermeneutic paradigm of blackface, Franko reads as the submission of white aristocratic performers themselves to royal power, under their makeup. The element of critique directed at the royal power comes from the outrageous analogy between aristocrats and black slaves: white male aristocrats re-purposed the racializing discourse embedded in blackface to articulate a critique of their current condition.

I argue that the dynamics splendidly identified by Mark Franko regarding the recuperation of blackface also characterize the appropriation of black dances by aristocratic dancers.[293] Aristocrats did not only point out the submission to which the French crown subjected them by deploying a specific rhetoric around their make-up, but also by adopting a specific body language—that of black dances. Indeed, as we saw earlier in the section on Spanish *guineo* movements, black dances were the opposite of what aristocratic dancing was supposed to look like in a culture where, as Sarah Cohen points out, because the notion of nobility itself was going through an epistemological crisis, aristocrats' body language was expected to express and reify nobility (Cohen 4). François de Lauze, in *Apologie de la danse* (1623), considers that caprioles easily "smack of street dancing" (Lauze 46), and forty-five years later, dance theorist Michel De Pure could still write that "the dance we call The Beautiful Dance, which consists in moving with simplicity, respecting the steps, and keeping the tempo right and steady, is always more majestic—smacks more of nobility, and (even more importantly) of modesty and virtue" (Pure 279).[294] Caprioling their hearts away, aristocratic black dance performers—who, by virtue of the ballet performance esthetics, were always present on stage, recognizable under the characters they performed—declassed their own bodies by appropriating a racializing body language that put them "naturally" at the bottom of the social order in order to shock spectators. Considering themselves oppressed by a crown that increasingly used nobility to reward its most faithful and helpful servants, thereby depriving the

[293] Quite surprisingly, since Franko is a dance scholar, in his discussion of *Mores galants,* he exclusively thinks about blackface, and not about movement or dance.

[294] "*La danse que l'on nomme la belle, qui consiste en simples démarches, à bien observer les pas, et à garder des temps réguliers et justes, est toujours plus majestueuse et sent mieux sa personne de qualité, et ce qui vaut, beaucoup mieux encore, la modestie et la vertu"* (Pure 279).

old nobility of its exclusive privileges (see Chapter 1), white male courtiers ironically used the oppressive racializing dynamics of black dances for purposes of self-affirmation.[295]

In the next pages of this section, I revisit Ben Jonson's *Masque of Blackness* (1605) in the light of the politics of black dance delineated so far in this chapter, exploring, in the subjunctive mode, the possibility that Queen Anne might have drawn on black dances as she performed the masque. This would make it the earliest appearance of black dances in the English canon. I am not claiming that *The Masque of Blackness* was representative of English performance culture in the first decade of the seventeenth century; instead, I treat as an evocative case study.

Much has been written about the transgressive dimension of Queen Anne's decision to perform a masque in blackface, against all courtly decorum. Hardin Aasand insists on the autobiographical component of the masque for the Catholic queen of Danish descent in London:

> *The Masque of Blackness* presents Anne as a marginal figure, an alien princess indelibly stamped with an inferior color and in search of a social legitimacy in the Jacobean court . . . these ideas present in brief a profile consonant with the life of Queen Anne, a woman whose existence in the British court was characterized by her ethnic, religious, and feminine estrangement from accepted convention. (Aasand 276)[296]

Kim F. Hall concurs: "it is possible that [Anne's] request reflects some awareness on the queen's part of her own female estrangement from James's court" (K. Hall, *Darkness* 10). Aasand reads queen Anne's commission of *Blackness* on the occasion of twelfth night 1605 as an assertion of

[295] While it is naturally hard for us to think of white male aristocrats as an oppressed social group, it is my contention here, that this group had no difficulty seeing itself as victimized, and no qualms about drawing a parallel between its own condition and the condition of black slaves.

[296] Clare McManus argues that the ethnic difference performed by Anne through blackface in England was not solely Danish, but also Scottish, given "the specific associations which existed in Scotland between blackness and royal femininity," which Anne brought with her at the heart of the English court (McManus 77).

her own agency: "*The Masque of Blackness* is a supremely feminine masque, insisting on Anne's participation in Britannia's affairs and rejecting the notion that noble women defer to a masculine definition of their existence, challenging typical Renaissance notions of power which insisted on masculine incarnations that denied a role for independent noble women." (Aasand 280) Anne claimed political agency not only by commissioning a masque and performing it herself—an act of self-display which, in a country that did not admit of female performers in commercial theatre, was sufficient to "blacken" the queen's reputation (Andrea 264-265)—but by performing it in blackface, a demand from which the playwright distances himself as much as possible in his published account of the masque. As Bernadette Andrea explains: "from the perspective of Jacobean patriarchy, black(ened) femininity encodes loathsomeness, strangeness, and dishonesty. From the oppositional position of the Queen and her ladies, however, black(ened) femininity functions as a polysemic site of resistance" (Andrea 281). In other words, the queen's deliberate self-presentation as exotic, unruly, and threatening as she recuperated the general perception of black women through blackface opposed the strand of Jamesian ideology built upon an intersectional oppression of women and racial others.

As Kim F. Hall shows, the self-emancipatory dynamics of *Blackness* are short-lived, for the plot written by Ben Jonson, hinging upon the Ethiopian princess's desire to turn white and on the promise once made to them that the ruling sun of Britannia shall whiten them, promotes James' ability to contain, subdue, and eventually erase female blackness.

> In the execution of Anne's royal will, the masques concede power to the court males. Although Anne was the impetus for the performance of the masques, the actual power to do the impossible, proverbially described as "washing the Ethiope white," is credited to Britain's chief poet and sun, James . . . *The Masque of Beauty* presents an idealized world

> in which normally intransigent blackness is subdued by a European order predicated on white, male privilege and power. (K. Hall, *Darkness* 11-12)

This opposition between the assertion of Anne's female agency through embodiment and Jonson's attempts at containing her agency within an ideologically informed dramatic framework anticipates the dynamics identified by Franko twenty years later in the French burlesque ballet, where political satire is achieved through the emancipation of the performing body vis-à-vis text and textuality. It is not surprising, then, that the Queen and her blackened ladies' opportunity to contest the ideological message of Jonson's plot should be located in performance.

Indeed, during the masque's phase of revels, the queen and her ladies had a chance to subvert Ben Jonson's message. Following a formulaic structure, *Blackness* breaks down into four phases: first, a dramatic phase, characterized by dialogue between Oceanus, Niger, and Ethiopia, while the Queen and her ladies are quietly figured in the background. Second, a dancing phase, when the queens move from the background to the foreground, "danced on shore, every couple, as they advanced, severally presenting their fans: in one of which were inscribed their mixt names, in the other a mute hieroglyphic, expressing their mixed qualities" (Jonson, *Blackness* l.266-270). Third, a phase of revels, during which the queens choose men in the audience and invite them to perform social dances with them: "they danced with their men several measures and corantos" (Jonson, *Blackness* l.301-302). Fourth and last, a dancing phase symmetrically opposed to the second phase, during which the queens return to the background: "in a dance, they returned to the sea, where they took their shell, and with this full song went out" (Jonson, *Blackness* l.348-349).

As Bernadette Andrea notices, during the social dances of the revels, "the Queen and her ladies implicate the King and his men in the discourse of black beauty as they reach out and draw

the male spectators into the final dance. Instead of washing the Ethiopian daughters white, the King risks being similarly blackened" (Andrea 274). Having witnessed the masque, Dudley Carleton famously wrote to Sir Ralph Winwood that, during the revels, the Spanish ambassador "took out the Queen, and forgot not to kiss her Hand, though there was Danger it would have left a Mark on his Lips" (qtd. in Herford and Simpson 448).[297] Although the revels, hardly scriptable by nature, occupy a very small space in Ben Jonson's published account of the masque, they seem to have occupied a significant segment of the performance: when Aethiopia puts an end to the revels, she comments on the excessive length of the revels, declaring: "Enough, bright nymphs, the night grows old,/ And we are grieved we cannot hold/ You longer light." (Jonson, *Blackness* l.321-323)

Musicologist Sarah Schmalenberger confirms that the revels lasted for "an extended period" (Schmalenberger 34). One can only assume that performers dancing lively dances such as *corantos* for an extended period of time with the heavy costumes designed by Inigo Jones (Fig. 17) would sweat some of their makeup out, increasing the likeliness of staining their aristocratic dancing partners with their moist and exposed grimed forearms. Anne's decision to use blackface rather than a vizor or a masque for cross-racial performance purposes (a decision much lamented by Carleton for esthetic reasons) turned the revels, a moment over which Jonson's drama had little control, into a window of opportunity for spreading cosmetic blackness rather than erasing it, allowing Anne to reclaim some of the agency that the dramatic framework of the masque denied her. The revels became a subversive moment when, simultaneously, women had power over men (at least the power of choice), and blackness could take over

[297] Carleton's complete statement regarding the Spanish ambassador mentions that he "footed it like a lusty old gallant with his country-woman," a statement that echoes, perhaps, the widespread English perception of Spaniards as a people inclined to miscegenation (qtd. in Herford and Simpson 448).

whiteness (by staining it). In the parody of the *Masque of Blackness* embedded in Richard Brome's *The English Moor* (Brome had been Ben Jonson's secretary), during the phase of revels, Nathaniel Banelass and the Blackamoor maid Catelina dance a galliard before engaging in (supposedly) interracial intercourse, an act of miscegenation that threatens the core of Jamesian patriarchal and proto-colonial ideology.[298]

I want to suggest that the self-assertive and self-emancipatory dynamics of the *Masque of Blackness* that I have outlined above based on now mainstream readings of the masque could have been conveyed not solely through blackface (or blackface on dancing female bodies), but also through black dances, that is, through the racializing choreographic language that Anne and her ladies might very well have adopted for this performance.

At first glance, the *Masque of Blackness* seems devoid of the kind of black dances encountered and described throughout this chapter. "Measures and corantos," the only named dances invoked in Ben Jonson's account, can hardly be described as ethnic, and the social dances selected for the revels did not include any of the dances, such as the Canary or Saraband, that were imagined as African.[299] I would argue, however, that dance gave Anne and her ladies a window of opportunity for ideological self-emancipation, during the second and fourth phases of the masque that frame the revels: those dancing phases of transition, during which Niger's daughters move from sea to land and back, unnamed dances characterized by liminality,

[298] On Brome's parodic reflexion on Jonsonian masques, see Andrea Stevens's "Mastering Masques of Blackness."

[299] As Skiles Howard notes, Saraband and Canary were well-known among the English aristocracy. "Toward the end of the sixteenth century, while social dances like the galliard polished gender distinctions with variations that coded smoothness as feminine and elevation as masculine, others such as the sarabande and the canary confirmed a preoccupation with foreign exoticism and strange encounters. The sarabande, supposedly invented by the Saracens, was a sinuous, gliding dance accompanied by guitar and castanets, so in vogue that even little children (of gentle birth) knew it: the duchess of Buckingham proudly wrote to the duke that their infant daughter 'loves dancing extremely, and when the sarabande is played, she will set her thumb and finger together, offering to snap'." (S. Howard 113)

crossing, and decision-making.[300] The elaborate geometrical dances that graced *The Masque of Beauty* three years later were designed by dance master Thomas Giles (who himself danced in *Beauty*), and Ben Jonson also acknowledges Giles' participation in *Hymenaei*, which was performed just a year after *Blackness*.[301] But Giles' services were apparently not used for *Blackness*. Whether it be because Giles was not attached to the court yet in January 1605 or because Anne opposed his participation in *Blackness*, the absence of a credited choreographer in *Blackness* suggests that, even if there was a choreographer (and there probably was), the dancers had more leeway and agency in designing their own movements in the *Masque of Blackness* than in the following Jonsonian masques. Such leeway might have enabled the dancers to resort to a body language close to that of black dances.

[300] Some scholars have suggested that the dances performed during the revels, rather than being liberating for the women dancers, reinforced the Jamesian ideological agenda. Sarah Schmalenberger convincingly comments: "There is no evidence in any surviving documentation of any exotic or aberrant musical effect included in the work . . . The music for the masque's songs and dances preserved its rhetorical paradigm of articulating the sovereign's power over social and political order through the allegorical story of Niger's travels to Albion. The lone surviving song for the *Masque of Blackness*, as well as the substantial consort and dance music, can symbolize an effective method to contain, control, and even silence Otherness." (Schmalenberger 45) In other words, the very absence of black dances in Jonson's account of *Blackness* (corroborated by the absence of any allusion to ethnic dances in Carleton's or the Venetian ambassador's accounts of the performance) is political. Music and dance become an extension of James and Ben Jonson's ideological apparatus: choreography is a tool for retaining control over the bodies and erasing the blackness of unruly black(ened) female performers. The performance of white dances by supposedly African characters can read as an absorption of patriarchal ideology into the female dancers' own bodies. Skiles Howard sees another manifestation of Jamesian ideology in the use of corantos during the revels: "As its name announces, the coranto was a running dance, performed in sets of couples who swiftly circled the hall several times, settling briefly but regularly to rehearse with mimed flirtations ("be mine!" "not yet!") the gestural tropes of gender difference. Unlike the sober procession of the measures that traversed the perimeter of the hall with dignity and moderation, or the galliard in which the gentleman jumped and twirled, the coranto circled ever more swiftly and feverishly. Moreover, during its reign of popularity, the coranto gathered momentum as the basic step was increasingly streamlined to expedite a more rapid passage, building to a climax in which accelerating perambulations of the hall simultaneously enclosed the area within its compass and challenged its outer limits. The coranto enacted an aggressive consumption of space, an appetite for expansion: 'everywhere it wantonly must range / And turn and wind with unexpected change.' As the dance of favor, it dominated the revels portion of the masque with a festive enactment of expansion and inscription." (S. Howard 114-115) Thus, the coranto dance itself, according to Skiles Howard, expressed dynamics of expansion, inscription, consumption, and basically glutton and forceful conquest of space bearing strong affinities with the proto-colonial aspirations that were part of Jamesian ideology. By performing corantos during the revels, their very window of opportunity for working against Ben Jonson's dramatic framework, the queen and her ladies ironically absorbed that very ideology into their own body language. Through social dances, the women's bodies became vehicles for Jamesian ideology.

[301] Thomas Giles was, in 1610, the official "teacher to dance" of Prince Henry (Nichols 23).

Anne Daye has recently brought to light the influence of late sixteenth century French ballet culture onto Stuart masque culture, and, more specifically, the influence of *Le balet comique de la reine* (1582) onto Ben Jonson's *The Masque of Queens* (1609), the sequel to the *Masque of Blackness* (Daye 185-8). The existence of a communication channel between French and English court performance culture in the first decade of the seventeenth century that Anne Daye convincingly presents opens an intriguing avenue of reflection for this chapter. Since black dances were performed in at least two French ballets recorded in 1600 (the lost *Ballet du Roy des Maures Nègres,* and the extent *Pour des masques assez hideux et sauvages*), we may legitimately wonder whether the novelty trend of animalizing black dances in ballets that had just started developing in France influenced the makers of *The Masque of Blackness*. Maybe.

Besides the hypothesis of a French influence, we also have to reckon with the hypothesis of a Scottish influence. Clare McManus, comparing the *Masque of Blackness* to some of the royal entertainments that featured cross-racial and authentic Blackamoor performers in Scotland at the end of the sixteenth century, claims that, in *Blackness*, Anne appropriated, absorbed in her own body, the blackness that had surrounded her in previous Scottish entertainments:

> The English masque saw Anna's emergence from performative passivity; she took the marker of difference upon herself to assert her own oppositional stance in a statement of female cultural agency. Blackness was unproblematic when associated with the body of the lower class male performer, but was subversive when assumed by the female aristocratic body. (McManus 78)

Although McManus is only referring to blackface as the "marker of difference" here, she describes in detail some of the dances performed by those professional male performers in blackface during Anne's royal entry into Edinburgh in 1590, which clearly qualify as black

dances. A Danish spectator wrote an account of the spectacular entry:

> These men had been assigned a particular and special gait in imitation of various sorts of people." Unfamiliarity means that the Danish spectator went into greater detail than most about the kind of movement he observed; some moors danced jerkily, some low to the ground, and some with their heads down in disregard of their audience . . . the movements of the Moors' dance were associated with the antimasques dance and were imaginatively equivalent to their bodily performance of blackness. (McManus 77)

The apish dimension of the 1590s Moors' imitative gaits, combined with "jerky" movements and the displacement of the body's center of gravity closer to the ground (in a European dance esthetics were the upper body was to remain perfectly still and vertical) makes them black dances. If those were the choreographic equivalent of blackface, as McManus states, then they might have been appropriated by Anne some fifteen years later, as a "marker of difference" in the liminal phases of *Blackness* that empowered her the most.

Naturally, I am articulating this hypothesis in the subjunctive mood, in the absence of documentation confirming the use of black dances by Queen Anne in the *Masque of Blackness*. I simply want to raise the possibility that Anne, having been exposed to modes of racial impersonation that mobilized dance and body language, might have remembered those when she commissioned and performed a masque in which embodiment itself was the locus where she could assert herself and emancipate herself from the pervasive Jamesian ideological agenda. In the choreography of power relations that the *Masque of Blackness* produced, recursive and stubborn liminal black dances would have been a strong asset. For Skiles Howard, as far as dance is concerned, Ben Jonson could construe *Blackness* as anti-masque to *Beauty* a posteriori in virtue of a perceived progression from the unchoreographed dances of *Blackness* towards the

geometrically patterned dances of *Beauty* (S. Howard 118). Such a re-reading of *Blackness* as anti-masque would have been facilitated by the inclusion of black dances within the queens' body language. In *Blackness*, racializing black dances, complementing the work of blackface, might very well have been used by a white aristocratic woman for purposes of self-affirmation.

5) Commercial Stages: Black Antics and Power Play in *The Bondman* and After

In the last section of this chapter, I show how, in the 1620s, English commercial theatre started cannibalizing the various European traditions of black dance previously examined. Philip Massinger's *The Bondman,* first performed by The Lady Elizabeth's Men at the Cockpit theatre in London in 1623, functions as a crucible for those multiple interconnected traditions. In this play, black dances simultaneously animalize and debase black body language while they serve as a medium for expressing shifting interracial power relations between slaves and masters.

Thomas C. Fulton places *The Bondman* in the stream of late Jacobean and early Caroline plays written in response to the Anglo-Spanish crisis of the Thirty Years War, and he reads the Syracusan society of the play as a topical stand-in for English society, weakened by its dissolute spendthrift aristocrats, and about to be conquered by Spain/Carthage, were it not for the beneficial effect of the Dutch Republican ideology wielded by the Corinthian general Timoleon (Fulton 156-157).[302] I agree with Fulton that Syracuse is a reflection of English society in the early 1620s, but I also insist on reckoning with the colonial situation of Syracuse, which, as part of the kingdom of Sicily, had been under Spanish rule for a couple of centuries when Massinger wrote the play. A political laboratory, Massinger's fictional Syracuse, I argue, is a site where

[302] In his critical edition of the play, Benjamin Townley Spencer also reads Syracuse as a metaphor for England in the 1620s.

English and Spanish societies merge and English and Spanish traditions superimpose, producing dance forms and a dance culture that uncannily seem to Anglicize Spanish black dances.

Massinger's interest in black dances was probably connected to the presence of professional black musicians and dancers in early seventeenth century metropolitan England, due, for the most part, to ongoing Anglo-Spanish diplomatic and commercial exchanges. Africans were often perceived as entertainers, thus, as Kate Lowe notes, "a cluster of skilled occupations 'permited' to black Africans in Renaissance Europe centered on music" (Lowe 35), and England was no exception to the rule. The presence of black trumpeteers and drummers from the mid-fifteenth century onwards appears in documentary and visual sources with figures such as the trumpeter John Blancke at the court of Henry VIII in the 1510s. Imtiaz Habib documents the presence of "a blakman than was a taboryn in the gallet of Hampton" in Southampton in the 1490s, and the presence of black trumpeter Peter the More at the court of James IV of Scotland, where entertainments such as those that celebrated James' marriage to Anne of Denmark occasionally featured black dancers (Habib 58). Theatrical culture records the presence of those black musicians in courtly circles in *Love's Labor's Lost* (1598), for instance, where the Moscovite masque that the gentlemen from the Navarre court mean to perform for the French princesses is accompanied by "Blackamoors with music" (5.2.156-157). Habib notes that Jacobean musicians were "protected individuals who may 'not be arrested', nor be chosen into any office, nor warned to attend at assises, nor be impaneled on juries, not to be charged with any contributions, taxes or payment but in courts only as other of his majesty's servants" (Habib

136).[303] In other words, Afro-British musicians had a privileged status, which suggests that music (and by extension dance) could, in some cases, be a way of achieving vertical mobility for Afro-Britons who lived otherwise in a legal vacuum and fell somewhere on the expansive spectrum ranging from *de facto* servitude to menial occupations in a free capacity.

For instance, in Richard Brome's late Caroline city comedy *The English Moor* (1637), discussed at length in Chapter 3, the London merchant Quicksands resorts to black musicians and dancers for a private masque performance in his house on Market lane. Given the play's general investment in the social realities of late Caroline London, the scene suggests that black professionals were available for hire not simply at the court by also in town. The Blackamoors in question declare: "We were hir'd to dance and to speak speeches, and to do this gentleman service in his house" (4.5.883). They claim to be professional musicians, willing to "dance an antique in which they use actions of mockery and derision" (4.5.805-806) and to perform Quicksands' scenario against payment. While the dances performed here strongly echo those performed by Blackamoors in Edinburgh in 1590 for James and Anne's wedding, the willingness of Quicksands' black dancers to perform an "antique" echoes the willingness of Afro-Spanish dancers, such as Francisco Meneses, to perform racializing black dances in order to emancipate themselves, thereby adding ambivalence to the power dynamics of black dances.

Indeed, black "antique" dances were racializing dances in that they fully participated in the early seventeenth century choreographic trend that animalized black body language across the Channel. Interestingly, their first registered occurrence in commercial theatre is found only

[303] In addition to professional Afro-British musicians, some black servants were occasionally called upon to dance during courtly entertainments, such as Ellen More, who was a maidservant to Margaret Tudor and "presided over the Scottish court's entertainments in 1507 and 1508 as the 'Black Queen of Beauty'" (Andrea 257), or such as the black pages used at the Scottish court of James I to celebrate his marriage to Anne of Denmark.

three years after the *Masque of Blacknesse,* in John Mason's *The Turk* (1608), when Mulleasses exclaims:

> Be pleas'd ye powers of might, and bout me skip
>
> Your anticke measures: like to cole black moores,
>
> Dauncing their high Lavoltas to the Sun
>
> Circle me round. (3.4.1-4)

The word antics "originally applied to fantastic representations of human, animal, and floral forms, incongruously running into one another, found in exhuming some ancient remains (as the Baths of Titus) in Rome, whence extended to anything similarly incongruous or bizarre" (OED). Applied to the realm of dancing, the term connoted the hybridization of human body language with animal forms. Never described or depicted precisely, "antics" are a choreographic principle: not a codified dance, but a style encouraging performers to unleash their imagination and animalize their own body language. Systematically used in anti-masques to convey an impression of chaos, "antick" dances in early modern English theatre are typically performed by three main groups: devils (or menacing supernatural creatures), racial others (Africans, Indians, Turks, and Gypsies), and baboons.[304] Baboons and devils share a common physiological hybridity: they both combine some anthropomorphic features with animal features. The association of Afro-diasporic people with those creatures through "anticks" construes them as

[304] Too many plays feature antick-dancing devils for me to list them here, but a couple of plays featuring ethnic anticks deserve to be mentioned. Indians dance anticks in Aphra Behn's *The Widdow Ranter* (1690), so do Gypsies in the various translation of Corneille's *Pompey* in the 1660s, and Turks in Ravenscroft's *The Citizen Turn'd Gentleman* (1671). Baboons dance "delightful anticks" as early as in Chapman's *Memorable Maske* (1613), and "a Boy drest like a Baboon . . . making mouths and anticks postures" eighty years later, in the Earl of Orrery's *Guzman* (1693) (Orrery 18).

hybrid humanoids on the fringes of mankind.[305] As my close reading of *The Bondman* will show, Massinger threw that tradition into his crucible of a play in 1623.

The plot of *The Bondman* revolves around a slave rebellion in Syracuse during the failed Carthaginian attempt at invading the island, which was repelled by the Corinthian Timoleon in 338 BC. Longing for the time when bondage in Syracusan society followed a paternalistic model, "when lords were styled fathers of families / and not imperious masters" and when "each private house derived / the perfect model of a Commonwealth" (Massinger, *Bondman* 120), the slaves take advantage of their masters' absence, as those are fighting the Carthaginians. They take over the city, "shake off their heavy yokes off" (Massinger, *Bondman 120*), rape the masters' wives and daughters, and perpetrate the same abuse that has been inflicted on them. When the masters come back, they defeat the slaves, and ultimately spare their lives in exchange for their submission.

Although the slaves are never explicitly called Blackamoors, the alignment of Syracusan slaves, the enemies from within, with the Carthaginian enemies from without (whose victory would turn white Syracusans into slaves) points towards a Moorish identity. Onomastics confirms this: the lead female slave character is called Zanthia, and she shares that name with another Zanthia whose Moorishness is clearly stated in a later play by Massinger, *Believe as you list* (1631). In *The Parliament of Love*, written the same year as *The Bondman*, Massinger introduces yet another Moorish woman, whom he describes as having a "dark complexion" (Massinger, *Parliament* 172), while declaring that people "of her country" typically have "thick lips" and "rough curl'd hair" (Massinger, *Parliament* 167). Thus Zanthia in *The Bondman* was

[305] Sometimes, those categories intersect and redouble each other. In Whitaker's *The Conspiracy* (1680) Blackamoors dance an antick disguised as fiends (Whitaker 51), and in Aphra Behn's *Emperor of the Moon* (1687) "negroes dance" to join a chorus that includes the hybrid humanoids that are satyrs and fauns (Behn, *Emperor* 60).

likely to be performed as a Blackamoor, in blackface, especially given the kinship between her name and that of the memorable black maid created by Webster in *The White Devil* a few years earlier, Zanche. The ethnic ambiguity attached to those characters and those dances should not be ignored, especially in the light of the commendatory verses in which William Basse refers to the "Gipsie jigges . . . drumming stuffe, and dances" of the play. Nonetheless, the deployment of those ambiguous ethnic dances within the slavery-based society of Syracuse underlines their special affinities with the trope of black dances.

Massinger uses black dance as a powerful metaphorical platform to express the shifting power relations between slaves of color and white masters throughout the play. When the slaves state their demands to their masters as those come back victorious from the war, they ask, in addition to a general pardon for their offenses, for

> Liberty
> To all such as desire to make return
> Into their countries; and, to those that stay,
> A competence of land freely allotted
> To each man's proper use, no lord acknowledged
> Lastly, with your consent, to choose them wives
> Out of your families. (Massinger, *Bondman* 121)

Those demands, immediately rejected by the masters, all express a desire for mobility: geographic mobility (leave to depart), social mobility (land ownership), and interracial mobility as well as sexual physical mobility (free marriage)—they ask for freedom of movement in all the possible senses of the word. Dance encodes this desire for free movement, this yearning for mobility on the slaves' part, and, as such becomes a form of political action throughout the play.

In that sense, Massinger's slave dances echo the role of Spanish *guineo* as a symbolical and practical tool for slaves to re-negotiate their condition in the Peninsula.

When Marullo, the mutineers' leader (a white Theban lord in disguise using the situation for pursuing his love interest) incites slaves to rebellion and asks what they are ready to do to conquer their freedom, Gracculo responds: "Anything! To burn a church or two, and dance by the light on't, were but a May-game" (Massinger, *Bondman* 112). Mentioning dance and the early modern English tradition of May-games so close to each other, the slave immediately evokes Morris dancing—which was sometimes performed in blackface by English dancers—in the spectators' minds, and associates it with the image of a violent attack upon the religious institution upholding the slavery-based system. At the beginning of the third act, the rebellion that Gracculo dreams of is carried out, and danced out, naturally:

> Hell, I think's broke loose
> There's such variety of all disorders
> As leaping, shouting, drinking, dancing, whoring,
> Among the slaves; answer'd with crying, howling,
> By the citizens and their wives; such a confusion,
> In a word, not to tire you, as I think,
> The like was never read of. (Massinger, *Bondman* 113)

Gracculo's revolution is when the body politick dances a "leaping," chaotic, and violent convulsive dance.

Two scenes later, power dynamics have been reversed, and the slaves are now masters of all the white Syracusans who stayed in the city instead of leaving for the front. Gracculo has his white ridiculous former master Asotus dance as a Baboon "in an ape's habit, with a chain about

his neck." A scene of petting ensues. "Gracculo: What for the Carthaginians? [*Asotus makes mopes*] A good beast. What for ourself your lord? [*Dances*.] Exceeding well. There's your reward. [*Gives him an apple*.]" (Massinger, *Bondman* 115). Forcing Asotus to pull faces, dance anticks, and "caper like an ape" (Massinger, *Bondman* 125), Gracculo brings attention to the animalizing dimension of black dances: this animalization is exerted against the master, but only as part of carnivalesque role reversal. Thus, the scene highlights dance's participation in the animalizing discourse wielded against Afro-diasporic people.

Meanwhile Zanthia's former mistress, Corisca, who suffers the same fate as her stepson Asotus, is called a "Jane-of-Apes," the female version of a jackanapes. This term animalizes her and reasserts the political value of the black dance metaphor, since "jackanape" also referred derogatively to a social upstart, someone who craved mobility. When, due to the revolution, Poliphron is able to marry his former mistress and lover Olympia, the Moorish community celebrates this marriage and the interracial mobility that it represents with a dance, but not any dance, a vengeful one—"Gracculo: I have thought of a most triumphant one, which shall express we are lords and these our slaves" (Massinger, *Bondman* 116). This dance signals that black-white power relations have not been abolished by the revolution; they have been inverted.

It is not surprising then, that the final restoration of white power over the Syracusan black slaves should take the form of a black dance. Gracculo, seeing that the fight against the victorious white masters is lost, is ready to take responsibility for his people and be hanged, he states, with undeniable panache: "Let the State take order for the redress of this abuse, recording 'twas done by my advice, and, for my part, I'll cut as clean a caper from the ladder, As ever merry Greek did." (Massinger, *Bondman* 132) In that scenario, Gracculo, standing by his previous decisions would caper into death, turning black dance into a defiant final claim of

agency. But the play does not end on this note, for black dances are ultimately recuperated to reassert white power:

> Timoleon: Yet I think you would shew more activity to delight our master for a pardon.
>
> Gracculo: O! I would dance, as I were all air and fire. [*Capers*.]
>
> Timoleon: And ever be obedient and humble?
>
> Gracculo: As his spaniel, Though he kick'd me for exercise; and the like promise for all the rest.
>
> Timoleon Rise then, you have it. (Massinger, *Bondman* 132)

Gracculo performs the last black dance of the play in a final act of submission to white power, participating in his own canine animalization, capering his way into oppression and survival.

To summarize, over the course of the play, black dances repeatedly serve as a metaphor stylizing revolutionary violence and mutiny, as a currency in which masters—black or white—can place demands on enslaved bodies, and as a medium for animalizing enslaved bodies. The first extant English play to stage black dances, *The Bondman* makes two striking moves. First, as a commercial play, it capitalizes upon the primarily (but not exclusively) court-based tradition of animalizing black body language across the Channel, and gives it a larger, farther-reaching platform. Second, *The Bondman* Anglicizes the early modern Spanish culture of *danzas de negros*, as it puts black dances forth as a medium for expressing interracial power relations in the context of slavery, and emphasizes the ambivalence of that choreographic medium by showing how slaves and masters simultaneously use it against one another.

The Bondman created in 1624 a prototype of black dances understood as a medium expressing interracial power relations in the context of slavery for the public stage. That tradition

would intensify in English commercial theatre later in the seventeenth century as the English colonial drift deepened, in rhythm with colonial developments. In the *History of Sir Francis Drake* (1659), for instance, Davenant would have Symerons, that is, former slaves, "dance a morisco for joy of the arrival of Sir Francis Drake," their ally against the Spanish masters from whom they have escaped (Davenant 13). That Elkanah Settle's Restoration spectacular *The Empress of Morocco* (1673), the first English play printed with woodcuts, should include a lively reproduction of a black dance (Fig.17) is indicative of the striking effect of this technique on spectators, and of the growing importance of black dances in English collective imagination at the dawn of the colonial era (Settle 12-13).[306] In Pierre Motteux's 1668 operatic version of *The Island Princess*, "Enter an African Lady, with slaves who dance with timbrels; a negro lord makes love to her": the African aristocrats are involved in courtship — but black slaves dance (Motteux 42). In Thomas Southerne's 1695 adaptation of *Oroonoko*, "the scene drawn shews the slaves, Men, Women, and children upon the ground, some rise and dance, others sing the following song," but Oroonoko and Imoinda, the African aristocrats, don't dance: they observe the black slaves' dance like the white masters do (Southerne 27). Oroonoko's refusal to engage in dancing manifests how little of a slave he is by nature, in line with Aphra Behn's classist delineation of her black hero: it expresses his aristocratic refusal to engage in traditional slave-master power play.

It is not a coincidence that all the late seventeenth century plays including black dances that I just mentioned should be set on islands or in English colonies. Indeed, the colonial

[306] The engraving from *The Empress of Morocco* shows six barefoot black male dancers singing, holding tambourines, dancing in pairs and raising their legs laterally, while three barechested black musicians in the background play two different kinds of drums, suggesting powerful volume and rhythm. The Moorish aristocrats, represented as white-skinned do not dance: they observe the dance, seated on stage like embedded spectators.

literature that develops in mid-seventeenth century England evokes almost systematically the dances performed by plantation slaves in the Atlantic world. Richard Ligon's *A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados* (1657), for instance, describes how "On Sundays in the afternoons, their music plays, and to dancing they go," sometimes the whole day (Ligon 50). Richard Blome repeats some elements from Richard Ligon's text, when he describes Barbados slaves' dance in *A Description of the Island of Jamaica With the Other Isles and Territories in America to which the English Are Related* (1678): "Every Sunday . . . they spend the day in recreation, as dancing and wrestling, which they delight in, though they are no great proficient in either, for in their dancing they use **antick action**, their hands having more of motion than their feet, and their head than either" (Blome 39, emphasis added).

The same trend can be found in contemporary French colonial writings, where black dances were central. In 1658, in his *Histoire naturelle et morale des iles Antilles de l'Amérique,* Charles de Rochefort describes the dances performed by slaves in the island of St Christophe, and he writes: "one could tell that, after they had danced thus, they would work with more energy, not showing any mark of weariness, and better than if they had rested all night" (Rochefort 322).[307] Such a statement resembles those made by Diego Ortiz de Zuñiga in 1677 and by Zacharias Wagener in the 1640s: black dances are an outlet, a safety valve for the slaves' frustrations both in the metropole and the colonies.[308] Not surprizingly, then, "it was not

[307] "*On remarquait qu'après qu'ils s'étoyent divertis de cette sorte, ils travailloient de beaucoup meilleur courage, sans témoigner aucune lassitude, et mieux que s'ils eussent reposé en leur cabane tout le long de la nuit"* (Rochefort 322).

[308] This socially conservative function of dance as an outlet for frustrations that serves to maintain an oppressive social system in place is characteristic not only of slavery, but also of colonial societies, according to Frantz Fanon. "Any study of the colonial world should take into consideration the phenomena of the dance and of possession. The native's relaxation takes precisely the form of a muscular orgy in which the most acute aggressivity and the most impelling violence are canalized, transformed, and conjured away. The circle of the dance is a permissive circle: it protects and permits . . . When they set out, the men and women were impatient, stamping their feet in a state of

uncommon for slave owners to participate in the frolics [slaves] organized. They indulged the slaves with whiskey, sang and danced with them, served as musicians, and frequently were spectators." (Hartman 45) Beyond Sunday dances, Hartman has shown how black dances were part and parcel of the plantation economy, from slave ship decks, to the market places, to the fields where black bodies moved to the sound of music: "innocent amusements supplemented other methods of managing the slave body" (Hartman 43). Yet at the turn of the seventeenth century, in the *Nouveau voyage aux Iles de l'Amérique*, Jean-Baptiste Labat also insists on the subversive potential of black dances in Caribbean plantations:

> Edicts were made in the island to forbid *calendas*, not only because of the indecent and lascivious movements of which this dance is made, but also in order to prevent *nègres* from assembling: gathered so merrily and often drunk on liquors, bands of *nègres* can rise, riot, or go steal. (Labat 53)[309]

In short, colonial writings in the second half of the seventeenth century show how important and anxiogenic black dances were in colonial societies. They were so important and anxiogenic that staging those societies meant staging black dances. In that sense, the development of black dances on stage after 1642 is linked to the larger development of exoticism on the English stage.

But black dances were also increasingly becoming part of metropolitan life, due to the increasing volume of exchanges between the metropole and the colonies. Indeed, the number of "hue and cry" advertisements published in London newspapers in the last quarter of the

---

nervous excitement; when they return, peace has been restored to the village; it is once more calm and unmoved . . . Now the problem is to lay hold of this violence which is changing direction." (Fanon, *The Wretched* 56-57)

309 "*On a fait des ordonnances dans les isles pour empêcher les calendas non seulement à cause des postures indécentes et tout-à-fait lascives dont cette danse est composée, mais encore pour ne pas donner lieu aux trop nombreuses assemblees des nègres, qui, se trouvant ainsi ramassez dans la joie et le plus souvent avec de l'eau de vie dans la tête, peuvent faire des révoltes, des soulèvements, ou des parties pour aller voler*." (Labat 53)

seventeenth century signals an increasing black presence in the city. Pepys' diary mentions black dances. On March 1661, as part of post-dinner festivities in a tavern, he writes, "we made Mingo, Sir W. Batten's black, and Jack, Sir W. Pen's, dance, and it was strange how the first did dance with a great deal of seeming skill" (qtd. in Habib 179). Rodreguez King-Dorset has shown that, in the early eighteenth century, "most of the blacks making up the London community came from the Caribbean" (King-Dorset 83), and that, for them, dance was a tool for community building (King-Dorset 103). Black Afro-diasporic people transported from the colonies to London brought colonial black dance culture with them, as well as the heightened ambivalent power dynamics attached to it. In that sense, the situations of late seventeenth century London and Seville were comparable: the intense circulation of texts and bodies between the metropole and its colonies led black dances to assume a central role in the metropolitan social imaginations expressed on stage.

Colonization brought about a new regime of representation for blackness on the English stage in the second half of the seventeenth century. That new regime of representation relied heavily on a tool that was not entirely new but had remained underutilized so far on the public stage: namely, black dances, which—infused with animalizing propensities coming most probably from France, and interracial power dynamics coming most probably from Spain—had entered the repertoire with *The Bondman* (1623) and maybe even as early as *The Masque of Blackness* (1605). Those early seventeenth century occurrences of black dance in English performance culture might be scarce in the extant archives, but they show that post-Restoration black dances were not conjured out of thin air, and they establish performative lines of continuity in time (across the divide of the Interregnum) and space (between England, Spain, and France).

6) Conclusion: Now, Let's Get In Formation

Dance played a tremendous role helping marginalized and often enslaved black subjects form and sustain communities in early modern Europe, whether it be by providing them with a socially acceptable framework for meetings, with a mode of communal, physical, and spiritual healing and recreation, an asset for public relations for black confraternities, or career options that increased the social mobility of skilled individuals. The role of dance in the life of Afro-diasporic communities explains to a large extent the development of the black performance tradition across the Western world that I have tried to recover from the early modern archives in this chapter. Whether it be in eighteenth century Southern plantations, in the choreographies of the Harlem Renaissance, or in hip-hop culture, dance has remained a crucial medium for radical black political expression in Western societies since the seventeenth century. In the last few pages of this chapter, I want to examine the relevance of early modern black dances to our cultural moment, by analyzing the aspects of early modern black dance performance traditions that have endured to this day.

In her choreopoem titled "Why I had to DANCE" (2006) Ntozake Shange deploys a conception of black art as inherently kinesthetic: "the movements propelled the language and /or the language propelled the dance/ it is possible to start a phrase with a word and end with a gesture/ that's how i've lived my life/ that's how i continue to study/ to produce black art" (Shange 42). Shange also explains that her sense of political pan-Africanism is rooted in dance: "that was the beginning of the foundation of my pan- afro-hemispheric consciousness/ wherever the colored people were/ there were dances i could do & claim as mine/ cause / i was colored too" (Shange 41). Black Afro-diasporic people have often framed the cultural importance of dance in their communities in terms of biological heredity: Shange herself uses this rhetoric to

frame her theory of cultural retention: "it's in the blood, my mother say/ in the blood and practice//" (Shange 41)[310]

The rhetoric of heredity ("it's in the blood") proceeds in part from a desire to retrieve a pan-diasporic black memory, that is to say, it results from a longing to read dance as a site for self-determined cultural transmission that could resist the brutal processes of cultural dislocation, atomization, and erasure that slavery visited upon black Afro-diasporic subjects. That longing translates into various scholarly attempts at tracing the continuity between some African dance forms and modern Afro-diasporic dance forms: in that narrative of transmission, early modern Afro-diasporic dances obviously play a key role.[311] I have no doubt that this approach can yield valuable insights, but, having spent time with early modern texts referencing black dances, I would point out that the genealogical approach, in addition to reifying African dance culture by assuming that African dances have hardly changed since the sixteenth century, takes its cues about early modern African and Afro-diasporic dances from Western texts that are deeply biased. Thus, while I acknowledge that the repertoire, as defined by Diana Taylor, exists and that bits of African cultural knowledge can be, and probably were, transmitted through dance, I believe that the specifics of such transmissions are lost to us. Tracing the continuity between early modern and contemporary black Afro-diasporic dances poses major methodological challenges.

---

[310] Admittedly, I am only focusing on the first half of the sentence ("it's in the blood"), and leaving aside, for now, the second part of the sentence ("it's in the practice"). That second half undoubtedly complicates the poem's discourse and evidences a theory of choreographic transmission that is not limited to heredity. Here, however, I am interested in Shange's mobilization, as brief as it may be, of a pervasive rhetoric of blood and heredity.

[311] Such scholarship includes but is not limited to Mark Knowles. *The History of Early Tap Dancing*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland and Company, 2002; Lynne Fauley Emery. *Black Dance From 1619 to Today*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Book Co., 1988; Sonjah Nadine Stanley-Niaah. *Dancehall: From Slave Ship to Ghetto*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2010; and Edward Thorpe, *Black Dance*, London: Chatto & Windus, 1989.

Naturally, longing is not the only motivation behind the use of the rhetoric of heredity by black Afro-diasporic people: a strategic use of essentialism in the context of international black political affirmation can also explain it, and it is not my intention to police the terms chosen by Shange or any member of the Afro-diasporic community to express their own experience of dance and sense of legacy.[312] Yet, the perspective provided by the history of sexualization and animalization proper to early modern black dances that this chapter has retraced should make us wary of the numerous instances in our contemporary moment when the rhetoric of biological heredity is wielded outside of Afro-diasporic communities to comment on black people's relation to dance. Perhaps because this rhetoric is generally used to express what is conceived of as a black superiority, an innate black sense of rhythm, dance is one of the very few domains in which essentializing blackness has remained socially acceptable in popular Western cultures. But in the seventeenth century, what was imagined as the special gift of black people for dance, a rather positive attribute per se in European cultures that highly valued dance, was also used to racialize them, that is, to place them at the bottom of European and nascent Atlantic social orders by construing them as wild, lowly, or barely human. As Jane Desmond puts it, "in North America, it is no accident that both 'blacks' and 'Latins' are said to 'have rhythm.' This lumping together of 'race,' 'national origin,' and supposed genetic propensity for rhythmic movement rests on an implicit division between moving and thinking, mind and body" (Desmond 47).

[312] On the question of strategic black essentialism, see *Orphée Noir* (1948), in which Sartre depicts *négritude* as the antithetical, oppositional phase necessary to prepare the realization of mankind in a raceless society (Sartre XLI), and see Fanon's response in *Peaux noires, masque blancs* (1652), where he argues that, for someone to reach self-awareness, they must experience *négritude* in earnest, as an end, and not a means (Fanon, *Peau Noire* 141).

Thus, rather than heredity, which, historically, has too close of a connection with the racial matrix for my taste, a more productive concept for thinking about black dance across time is recursivity, and, more specifically, the recursivity of power dynamics.

What do early modern black dances teach us about twenty-first century black dances? Not much in terms of forms, transmission, or pan-African diasporic identity (due to the methodological challenges I just mentioned), but much in terms of recursive power dynamics. Black dances may or may not have drastically changed since the seventeenth century (we shall never know), but what has not changed is the way they are used to negotiate interracial power relations. As Elizabeth Pérez shows in the case of twerk, for instance, white spectators still sexualize, moralize, and essentialize what they perceive as black dances, and, in that sense, black dances still racialize the black Afro-diasporic people with whom they are associated.[313] Similarly, white performers still appropriate dances that they identify as Afro-diasporic for their perceived subversiveness with little care for the formal contents of those dances, and virtually no consequences, as Miley Cyrus' pseudo twerk performance at the 2013 MTV VMA awards recently showed. The movements performed by Miley Cyrus in 2013 and Queen Anne in 1605 were probably very different, but when one looks at the interracial power dynamics in play, strong similarities appear between the two performances.

In a sense, Anne's putative performance might shed some light on Miley Cyrus' performance: early modern black dances might help us refine our understanding of the contemporary dynamics of cultural appropriation. Indeed one striking element of early modern

[313] "While its origins in the American South during the early 1990s have not gone unremarked, nor has its marked resemblance to traditional and modern African dances, its notoriety today derives chiefly from the racialized stereotypes that attend its performance by Black women, gay men of color, and those seeking to emulate them. Persistently dismissed as 'ghetto' or ' ratchet', twerk disrupts class-inflected norms for gendered behavior that associate proficiency in 'bottom-heavy dances' with moral turpitude and intellectual degeneracy (Bettelheim, quoted in McAlister 2002, 73)." (Peréz 16-17)

racial impersonation culture in the choreographic realm is the white performers' awareness of the power dynamics attached to black dances. French and English aristocrats dancing black did not mobilize solely the exotic esthetic surface of black dances, disconnecting them from their true meaning (which is what practitioners of cultural appropriation are usually reproached with today): on the contrary, aristocrats across the Channel appropriated this choreographic language because they perceived its political dimension and capacity to participate in, express, and contest power relations. In order to denounce their own predicament, aristocrats made black moves, temporarily appropriating the identity of people who struggled to reclaim their own mobility and control over their own bodies. This act of appropriation shows that, as early as the beginning of the seventeenth century, black bodies were becoming a point of reference in European political imagination for marking oppression, privation of mobility, and resistance. [314]

This level of awareness, however, did not translate into any form of cross-racial solidarity, not even in the name of shared gender-based oppression (aristocrats, men and women, prominently owned black slaves in early modern Europe). In other words, while white aristocrats perceived the political dimension of black dances and mobilized it to contest the authority of the monarch, they failed to perceive the extent to which performing those dances engaged them in a power play not only with the monarch, but also with black Afro-diasporic people. What is most condemnable in cultural appropriation today is not so much an outsider's decision to borrow elements from a culture as that outsider's failure to perceive the unequal power relations in which such borrowings take place—the borrower belonging, most of the time to the dominant

[314] One might contest the use of the phrase "cultural appropriation" here based on the idea that, for black dances to be appropriated by white performers, they would need to be authentically African in the first place, and as I showed early on in this chapter, black dances can read more accurately as the racially composite creations of an incipient multi-cultural Europe than as African artefacts. However, because black dances were presented as African artefacts, I maintain that some spectators perceived them as authentic and authentically appropriable.

social and cultural group. What early modern aristocratic appropriations of black dances show us is that people *will* keep committing cultural appropriation even when they understand the history and politics of the cultural practices that they appropriate, as long as they fail to imagine *themselves* as implicated in those history and politics.

Now, to return to the features of early modern black dance culture that have endured to this day and finally complete the list of interracial power plays that keep recurring across time: in line with early modern predecessors, Beyoncé is still using dance for black political self-assertion as she encourages African-American dancers and activists to "get in formation" and "prove to me you got some coordination" (Beyoncé). What recurs across time is not as much specific gestures, as interracial power play. To use Shange's words: "it's" *not* "in the blood," "it's" in the enduring Western drive to racialize black Afro-diasporic people. What has been transmitted, generation after generation, in black Afro-diasporic communities is not as much specific dance forms as the deep-seated awareness that dance is a privileged site of contestation and self-assertion.

Conclusion

December 5, 2016. New York, U.S. The playhouse of the Lucille Lortel Theater in the West Village was nearly full for the third Revelation Reading of the season performed by the Red Bull Theater—*The White Devil*, by John Webster. Directed by Louisa Proske, the cast proceeded to bring to life the 1612 play's characters: Brachiano and his lover, the eponymous white devil Vittoria, the secretary-turned-madman Flamineo, his conservative brother and victim Marcello, the Duke of Florence-turned-Mulinassar, and his lover, the Blackamoor maid Zanche. It was not the (undeniable) quality of the production that caught my attention, however, but the pseudo-African accent that an actress put on to read Zanche's lines: the artistic team had seen it fit that Zanche's lines should be performed in blackspeak.

A staged reading relies (by definition) almost exclusively on the auditory sphere to convey the universe of the play. I have no doubt that, if this had been a fully-fledged stage performance, the production team of the Red Bull Theater and the cast would never have dreamt of resorting to blackface to perform Zanche (Zanche's part was read by an actress of color that night). And yet, they felt comfortable using what I have, in this dissertation, argued to be the auditory counterpart of blackface, blackspeak—most probably because the team did not identify blackspeak as part of the same Western tradition of racializing performance techniques as blackface. Would Danaya Esperanza, the actress cast as Zanche, have agreed to perform that part in blackspeak if she had been taught about Lope de Vega's *habla de negros*? Probably not.

This stage reading performance, I believe, is the result of the Anglo-American habit of thinking about racial performance culture in isolationist ways. The audience of the Red Bull

theatre and, maybe even more so, the audience attending the Revelation Reading series, tends to be drawn from a small circle including a high proportion of academics. The production team of the Red Bull Theater, which, more often than not, uses color-blind casting, is obviously aware of race politics in the theatre industry. If no one in the production staff, artistic team, or audience was shocked that night, it is because blackspeak is generally not included in current discussions of racial impersonation in the U.S. In this dissertation, I have tried to show how, in their first occurences and developments in early modern Europe, several performance techniques racialized black Afro-diasporic people, leading audience members, through the force of their sheer repetitiveness, to think of those people as belonging at the bottom of the social order, independently from older racial paradigms such as religion or rank. It is my hope that this dissertation might help broaden the scope of how we understand racial impersonation by situating American racial impersonation culture within a larger Western tradition that first developed in early modern Europe and includes not only blackface, but also blackspeak, and black dances.

In my first two chapters, I have spanned a large corpus including plays by Shakespeare, Webster, Middleton, Nicolas Chrétien des Croix, Lope de Vega, Diego Ximénez de Enciso, and Andrés de Claramonte, among others, to show that English, Spanish, and French theatrical cultures, which, to represent Subsaharan Africans, all initially deployed a diabolical conception of blackface inherited from medieval culture, quickly parted ways. The diabolical associations of blackface constructed Afro-diasporic people as spiritual enemies who could not be absorbed into Christian European societies. A new literary paradigm emerged in Spain in the 1590s with Lope de Vega, who constructed Africans as desirable commodities belonging in European societies as slaves. It did so by deploying a dense rhetorical net of metaphors associating black skin with

precious black wares. Yet another paradigm of blackface emerged in French ballets in the 1620s; these works construed Africans as submissive lovers belonging in European societies as subjects lusting for their own domination. They did so by implying that their black skin had been burnt by the beauty of white female spectators or by the power of the French Sun King. When compared with those continental developments, the persistence of the exclusionary diabolical conception of blackface in England throughout the seventeenth century emerges as an exception pointing towards a distinctly strong English investment in the idea of blackness as sinful, and a permanence of the religious episteme in the sphere of racial representations in the Protestant nation.

In the third chapter, I have foregrounded blackspeak, a technique caricaturing Afro-diasporic accents, which originated in Iberian comedies, came to operate throughout Western Europe, and hybridized there with local traditions, such as the Irish stage accent in England. I have used psychoanalytical theories of humor as well as sociolinguistics to understand what made blackspeak risible, how the low place that the group dynamics of laughter assigned to Afro-diasporic people in the linguistic order translated imaginatively into a low place in the social order, and how this effect complemented the effect of blackface and stabilized systems of racial representation, allowing them to adapt in response to the pressure of social changes.

In the fourth chapter, I have compared the uses of black dances in England, Spain, and France, putting court ballets, street dances, and masques in conversation with commercial theatre and popular plays by Philip Massinger, Simón Aguado, or Elkanah Settle. Black dances construed Africans as particularly fit for the physical and sexual labor of slavery in Spain, and as beastial beings on the fringes of mankind in France and England, disseminating across performance sites and national borders the idea that Africans belonged at the border of mankind

in the Great Chain of being, and, consequently, at the bottom of the social order. Yet at the same time, black dances became a tool for black Afro-diasporic people to try and reclaim mobility and agency both symbolically and materially. As such, they were soon appropriated across the Channel in court spectacles by white aristocrats who wished to reclaim some mobility and agency from a royal authority that they experienced as a form of bondage. English commercial theatre soon absorbed all the power dynamics attached to black dances in European cultures, and produced, in Philip Massinger's *The Bondman,* a prototype for English black dances that would increasingly gain traction on stage as the English colonial drift deepened in the second half of the seventeenth century.

While I have chosen an analytical model that would bring out, chapter after chapter, the singular ideological work effected by blackface, blackspeak, and black dance, in performance those techniques were very often combined, and their racializing effect was thus multiplied. In French court ballets, for instance, the *Mores galants* were always performed with blackface and black dances simultaneously. In Spain, apart from exceptional black male characters and *mulata* maids, *negro* characters in commercial and free theatre were always performed simultaneously in blackface and blackspeak—and often with a black dance on top. To give but one example: in Tirso de Molina's 1635 *entremés El negro* (studied at length in Chapter 3), seeing the blackfaced Domingo dance after he delivers his long tirade in blackspeak, audience members most probably perceived Domingo as a commodity (blackface) and as in need of instruction to overcome intellectual deficiencies (blackspeak). They would also perceive him as engaged in a power play, fighting for his own mobility in potentially dangerous yet ravishing ways (black dance).

It was in England that the three performance techniques remained discrete for the longest time, as the scarcity of blackspeak and the belatedness of black dances in the extant dramatic

archives suggest. This singularity is, to a certain extent, due to the generic inclinations of each nation when it came to blackness, for blackspeak was inherently comedic, and the ravishing power of black dances over spectators was hardly suitable to the tragic mode. We might say that the dominant genre for representing blackness in the early modern period seems to have been comedy in Spain, ballet in France, and tragedy in England. It is of course impossible to draw definitive conclusions from an archive that, for all its generosity, is and shall remain lacunar. There might have been more English plays that used blackspeak and black dances. There might have been Spanish *comedias* with tragic black heroes. There might have been more commercial plays with black characters in France. And maybe time will tell. In the meantime, the archive, in its current state, points towards some generically inflated areas of predilection for representing blackness in the performance cultures of early modern England, France, and Spain.

Those genres of predilection could do particular ideological work in each country. In Spain, comedy, with its closed social horizon, its pre-determined social wisdom, and its emphasis on issues of marriage and breeding could express the solid racial discourse and attitudes of a well-established slavery-based social order. In France, ballet could procure wish fulfillment. Constituting a universe in which a closed social horizon—encompassed by the gaze of the monarch—could graciously absorb oppositional forces without imploding, ballet could expressed the taboo desires of a nation that was dreaming of a slavery-based social order. In England, tragedy, the genre of the *agôn*, could express the struggle of an ever-precarious social order in which slavery was in the making. Again, all three genres were or might very well have been operative in all three countries, but I would suggest that the particular ideological work that each genre could do *qua* genre in each country might explain, to some extent, why black plays

from a specific genre were popular and canonized in a specific country.[315] At any rate, the popularity of specific genres in given cultures at a given time played a role in the playwrights' creative decisions, and, in that sense, generic fashions influenced the formation of nationally defined racial esthetics.

However, when we take a closer look at those nationally defined racial esthetics, we start seeing that their moving parts were eerily similar to one another's. We start seeing that nationally defined racial esthetics were unique combinations of common racial ideas, lexemes, and performance techniques that circulated across national borders in early modern Europe. And we start seeing how, across the early modern period, the hermeneutic configurations and reconfigurations of circulating techniques of racial impersonation—blackface, blackspeak, and black dance—responded, in each European country, to changing perceptions of what Afro-diasporic people's status should be, due to the development of colonization and color-based slavery. Each country had its own timeline, its own colonial geography, its own pre-existing racial history, its own cultural particulars and circumstances, and its own esthetic inclinations. Yet, in each of them, the medium of theatre (and performance culture at large), racializing black Afro-diasporic people both fashioned and popularized the latest racial paradigm produced by the European racial matrix. A privileged site for racial formation in the early modern era, theatre participated in the diffusion of an epistemological novelty that still affects our lives today—one performance at a time.

[315] Valerie Forman echoes the idea that specific genres are particularly suited for the ideological needs of a given cultural moment when she notes that, in the context of the development of maritime trade at the beginning of the seventeenth century, "new economic practices required the English to reconceptualize loss itself as something productive," and she argues that tragicomedy was "particularly well suited to reimagine losses as fortunate events" (Forman 1). I am merely arguing that this kind of "particular suitedness" probably played a role in the popularity and the canonization of specific plays.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig.1: Noémie Ndiaye. "*Los beduinos* in Seville."
January 2016, photograph.

Fig. 2: "Satan sending Devils to the Antichrist." *Mystère du jour du jugement*. 1326-1350 (?), oil on parchment, Bibliothèque Municipale de Besançon.

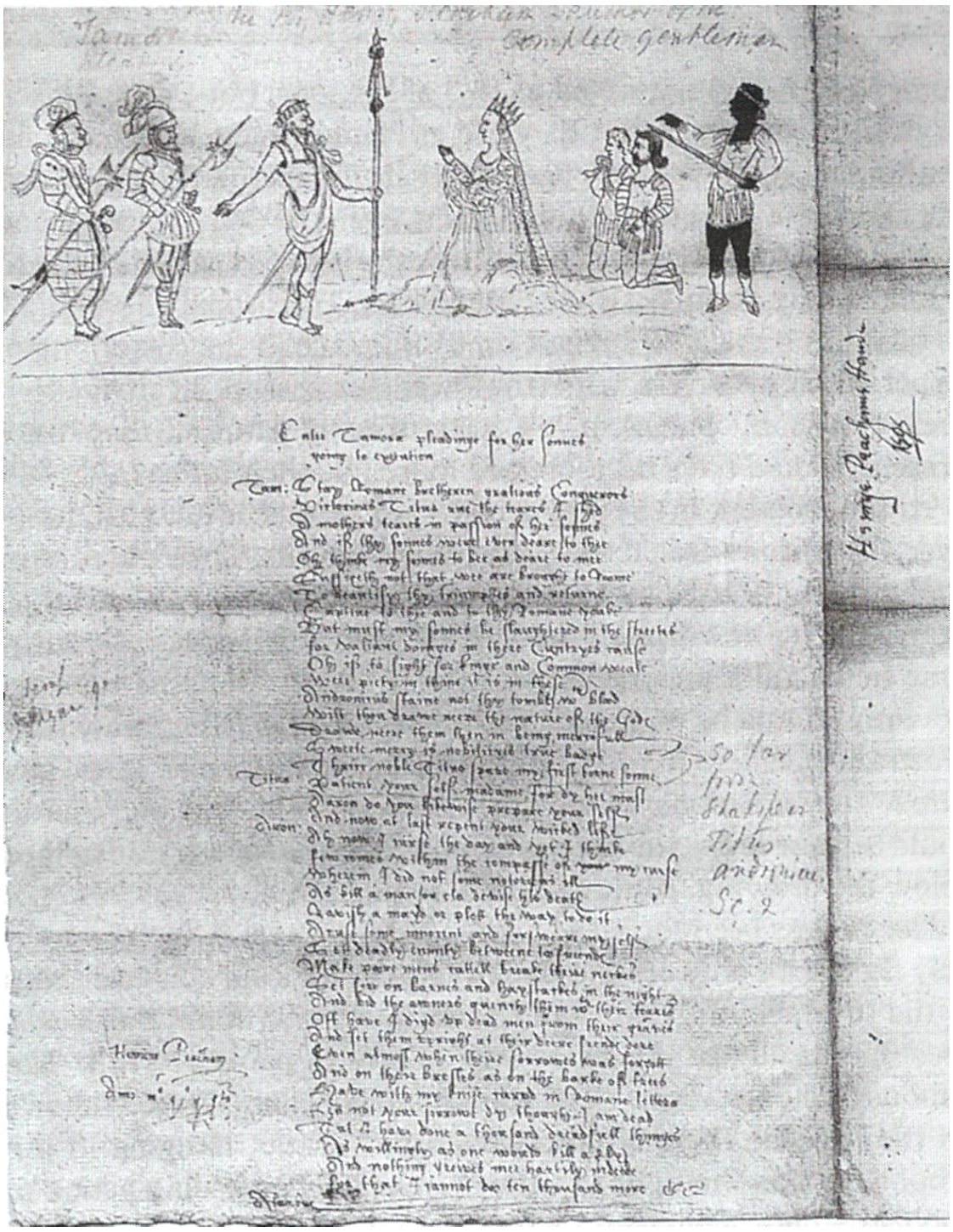
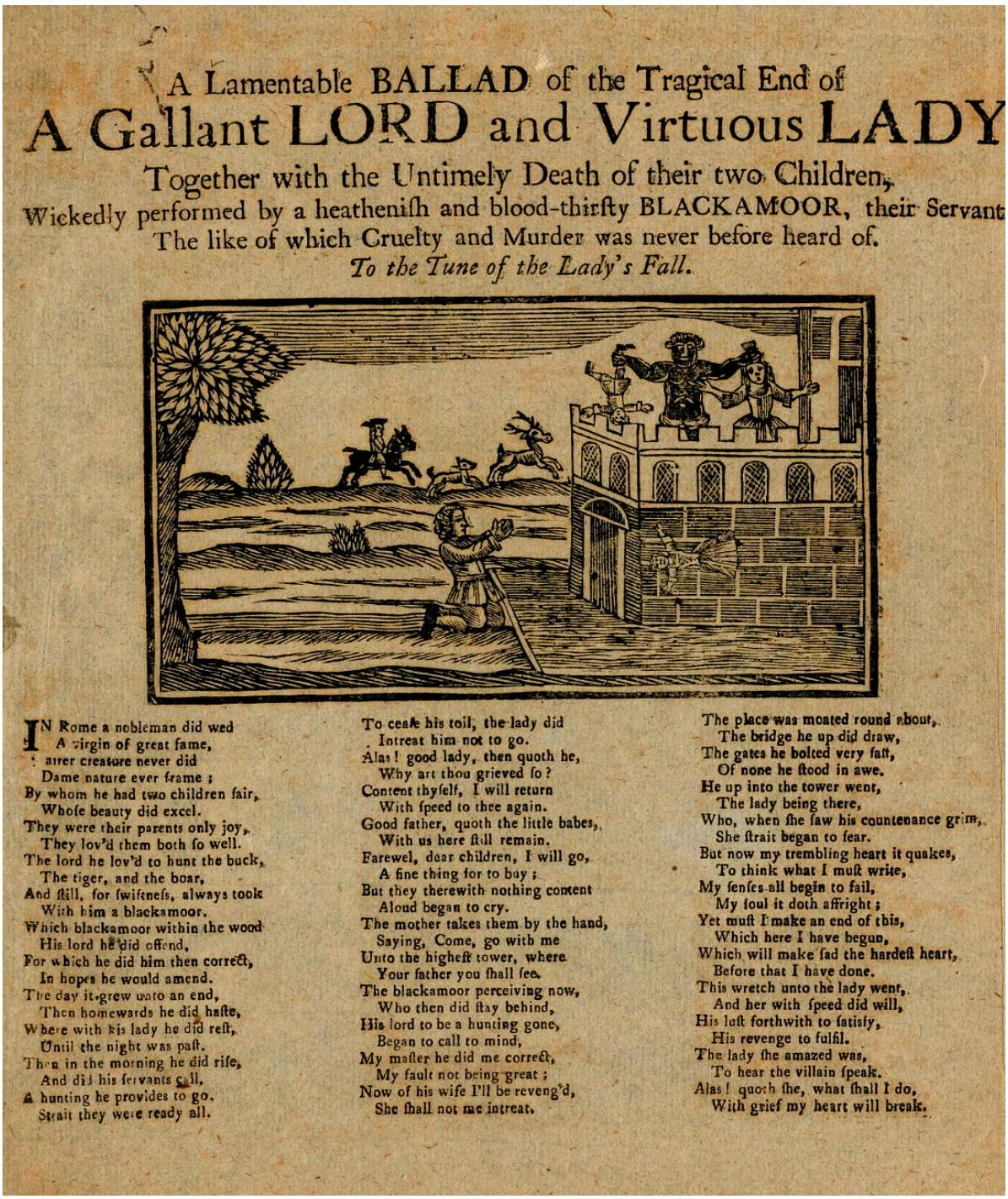


Fig.3: Henry Peacham. "The Peacham Drawing." *Longleat Manuscript.* 1595(?), ink and pen, Longleat House, Warminster, Wiltshire.

Fig.4: Abraham Cousturier. "Riviery Beating his Slave." *La Tragédie françoyse d'un More cruel*. 1613, woodcut, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris.



A Lamentable BALLAD of the Tragical End of
A Gallant LORD and Virtuous LADY
Together with the Untimely Death of their two Children,
Wickedly performed by a heathenish and blood-thirsty BLACKAMOOR, their Servant
The like of which Cruelty and Murder was never before heard of.
To the Tune of the Lady's Fall.

IN Rome a nobleman did wed
A virgin of great fame,
A fairer creature never did
Dame nature ever frame;
By whom he had two children fair,
Whose beauty did excel.
They were their parents only joy,
They lov'd them both so well.
The lord he lov'd to hunt the buck,
The tiger, and the boar,
And still, for swiftness, always took
With him a blackamoor.
Which blackamoor within the wood
His lord he did offend,
For which he did him then correct,
In hopes he would amend.
The day it grew unto an end,
Then homewards he did haste,
Where with his lady he did rest,
Until the night was past.
Then in the morning he did rise,
And did his servants call,
A hunting he provides to go,
Strait they were ready all.

To ease his toil, the lady did
Intreat him not to go.
Alas! good lady, then quoth he,
Why art thou grieved so?
Content thyself, I will return
With speed to thee again.
Good father, quoth the little babes,
With us here still remain.
Farewel, dear children, I will go,
A fine thing for to buy;
But they therewith nothing content
Aloud began to cry.
The mother takes them by the hand,
Saying, Come, go with me
Unto the highest tower, where
Your father you shall see.
The blackamoor perceiving now,
Who then did stay behind,
His lord to be a hunting gone,
Began to call to mind,
My master he did me correct,
My fault not being great;
Now of his wife I'll be reveng'd,
She shall not me intreat.

The place was moated round about,
The bridge he up did draw,
The gates he bolted very fast,
Of none he stood in awe.
He up into the tower went,
The lady being there,
Who, when she saw his countenance grim,
She strait began to fear.
But now my trembling heart it quakes,
To think what I must write,
My senses all begin to fail,
My soul it doth affright;
Yet must I make an end of this,
Which here I have begun,
Which will make sad the hardest heart,
Before that I have done.
This wretch unto the lady went,
And her with speed did will,
His lust forthwith to satisfy,
His revenge to fulfil.
The lady she amazed was,
To hear the villain speak.
Alas! quoth she, what shall I do,
With grief my heart will break.

Fig.5: "Lamentable Ballad of the Tragical End of a Gallant Lord and Virtuous Lady." Seventeenth century, woodcut, Misc. EB75 P4128C no.110, Houghton Library, Cambridge, MA.

Fig.6: Abraham Cousturier. "Riviery Freeing his Slave." *La Tragédie françoyse d'un More cruel*. 1613, woodcut, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris.

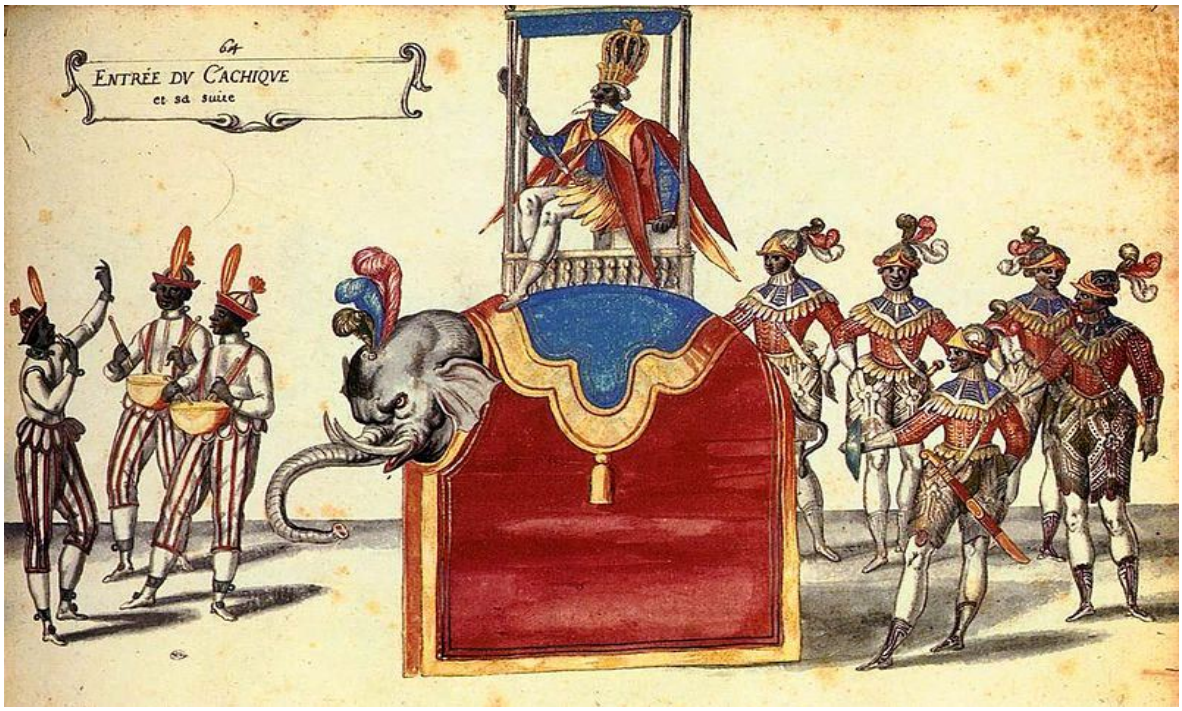


Fig.7: Daniel Rabel. "Entrée du cachique et sa suite."
Le grand bal de la douairière de Billebahaut.
1626, ink, oil, and watercolor, Cabinet des Dessins, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris.

Fig.8: Albert Eckhout. *African Woman and Child*.
1641, oil on canvas, Nationalmuseet Copenhagen.

Fig.9: Miguel Cabrera.
"Caste: From Spaniard and Black, Mulatto," "From Spaniard and Mulatto, Morisca."
1763, oil on canvas, private collection, Mexico.

Fig.10: Diego Velázquez. *Cena de Emaús*.
1620-1622 (?), oil on canvas, National Gallery, Dublin.

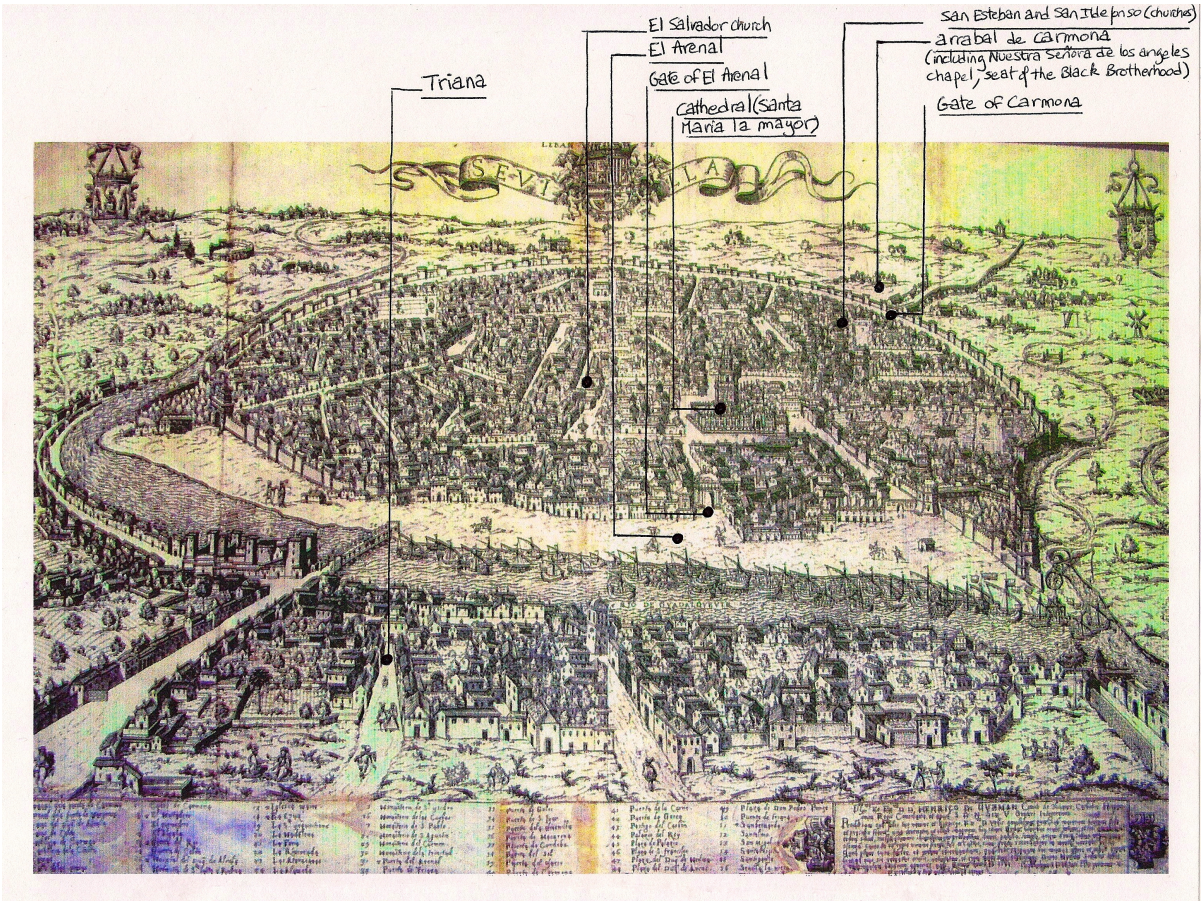


Fig.11: Ambrogio Brambilla. *Vista de Sevilla a finales del siglo XVI*.
1585, etching, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid.

Fig.12: Pedro Teixeira Albernaz. *Mantua Carpetatorum sive Matritum Urbs Regia* 1656, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid.

Fig.13: Paul Rubens. *The Adoration of the Magi*.
1609, oil on canvas, Museo del Prado, Madrid.

Fig.14: *Nueva relación y curioso romance en que se refiere la celebridad, galanteo, y acaso de una Boda de Negros, que se executó en la ciudad de el Puerto de Santa María, sucedió el año passado*. Dates unknown, woodcuts, H Ca. 030/180, Universidad de Sevilla, and PL 689, Fundación Joaquín Díaz, Valladolid, Spain.

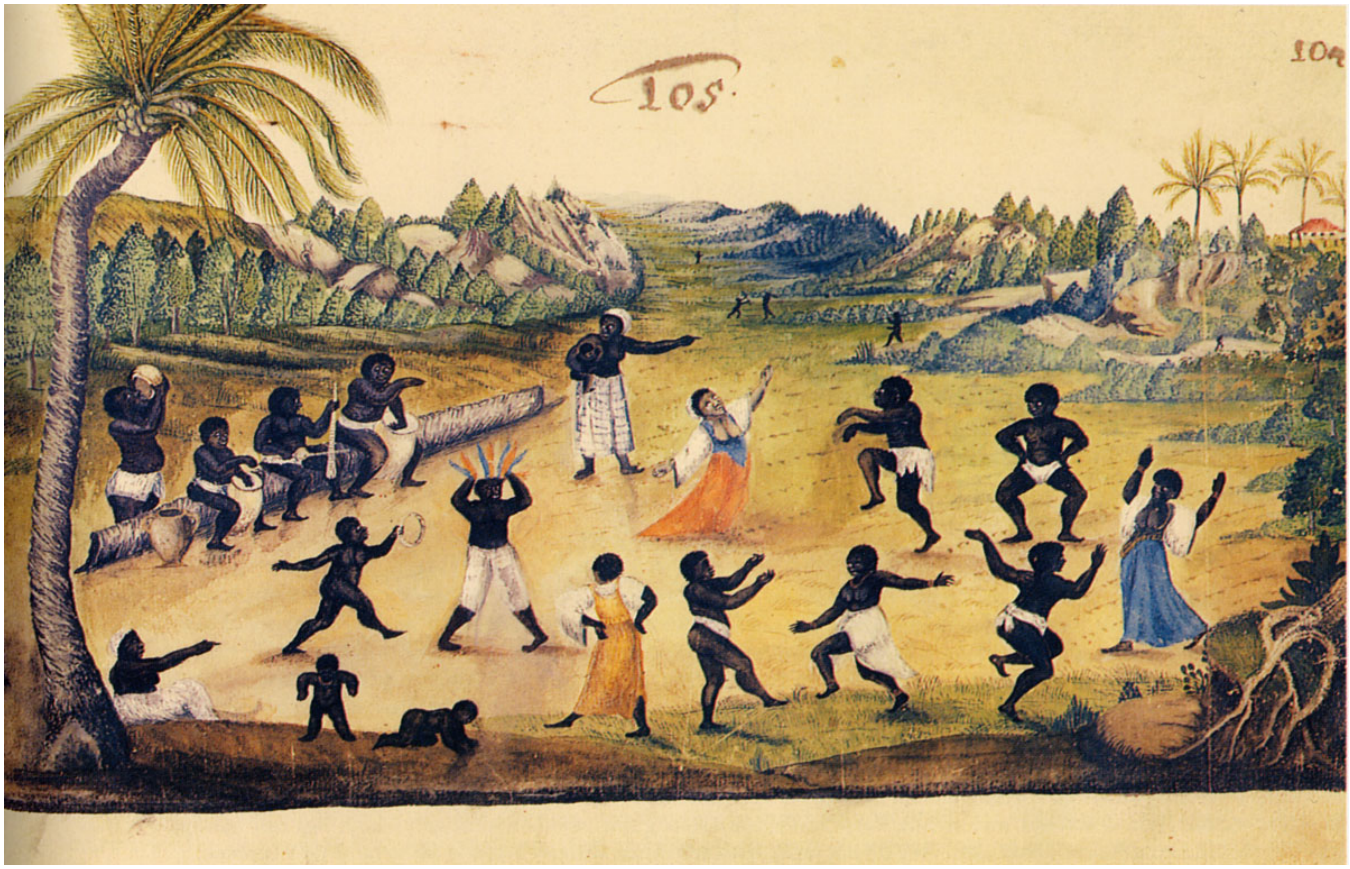


Fig.15: Zacharias Wagener. "Tanzende Negersklaven." *Thier Buch.* 1640, watercolor on paper, Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen, Dresden.

Fig.16: Daniel Rabel. "Cachique roy des Affriquains" (costume design).
Le grand bal de la douairière de Billebahaut.
1626, color plate, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Fig.17: Jones, Inigo. *Costume for a Daughter of Niger in The Masque of Blackness*. 1605, drawing, The Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth.

Fig.18: Settle, Elkanah. "Moorish Dance." *The Empress of Morocco*. 1673, woodcut, The British Library, London.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1) PRIMARY SOURCES

Africanus, Leo. *Historial description de l'Afrique, tierce partie du monde . . . Tome second de l'Afrique*. Lyon: Jean Temporal, 1556.

Aguado, Simón. "El platillo." *Collección de Entremeses, Loas, Bailes, Jácaras y Mojigangas, desde fines del siglo XVI á mediados del XVIII, Vol.1*, edited by Emilio Cotarelo y Mori, Madrid: Casa Editorial Bailly Bailliére, 1911, pp. 226-231.

---. "Los negros." *Collección de Entremeses, Loas, Bailes, Jácaras y Mojigangas, desde fines del siglo XVI á mediados del XVIII, Vol.1,* edited by Emilio Cotarelo y Mori, Madrid: Casa Editorial Bailly Bailliére, 1911, pp. 231-235.

Alvarez, Francisco. *Narrative of the Portuguese embassy to Abyssinia during the years 1520-1527*. Translated by Lord Stanley of Adlerley, London: Hakluyt Society, 1881.

"Aqui se contienen dos xácaras, una del mulato de Andújar, que se ha cantado en la comedia, otra del desafío que tuvó Periquillo el de Baeza con periquillo el de Madrid." Madrid, 1650 (?)

Arbeau, Thoinot. *Orchésographie*. Lengres: Jehan des Preyz, 1596.

Aubignac, Abbé de. *La Pratique du théâtre*. Paris: Antoine de Sommaville, 1657.

"Aucto de la paciencia de Job." *Códice de autos viejos,* 1550-1575 (?) Ms 14711. Biblioteca Nacional de España.

Avellaneda, Francisco. "Bayle entremesado de los negros." *Tardes apacibles de gustoso entretenimiento partidas en varios entremeses y bayles entremesados, escogidos de los mejores Ingenios de España*. Madrid: Andrés García de la Iglesia, 1663, pp. 67-70.

Ayala y Guzmán, Marcelo de. *El negro de cuerpo blanco y esclavo de su honra.* Madrid: Antonio Sanz, 1756.

"Ballet de l'almanach ou les prédictions véritables." *Ballets et Mascarades de Cour de Henri III à Louis XIV (1581-1652), Tome quatrième*, edited by Paul Lacroix, Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1968, pp. 123-154.

"Ballet de la magnifique duchesse de Dendaye." *Ballets et Mascarades de Cour de Henri III à Louis XIV (1581-1652), Tome troisième*, edited by Paul Lacroix, Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1968, pp. 81-100.

"Ballet de la tour de Babel." *Ballets et Mascarades de Cour de Henri III à Louis XIV (1581-1652), Tome troisième*, edited by Paul Lacroix, Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1968, pp. 205-225.

"Ballet de Monseigneur le duc de Vandosme." *Ballets et Mascarades de Cour de Henri III à Louis XIV (1581-1652), Tome premier*, edited by Paul Lacroix, Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1968, pp. 236-269.

"Ballet des divers entretiens de la fontaine de Vaucluse." *Ballets et Mascarades de Cour de Henri III à Louis XIV (1581-1652), Tome sixième*, edited by Paul Lacroix, Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1968, pp. 192-223.

"Ballet des proverbes dansé par son altesse Monsieur de prince de Vaudemont." Nancy: Anthoine Claude et Charles les Charlots, 1665.

Bandello, Matteo. *La Terza parte de le novella del Bandello*. Lucca: per il Busdrago, 1554.

Beaumont, Francis, and John Fletcher. *Love's Pilgrimage*. *Comedies and Tragedies Written by Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher.* London: Printed for Humphrey Robinson . . . and for Humphrey Moseley . . . , 1647, pp.

---. *Monsieur Thomas, A comedy. Acted at the Private House in Blacke Fryers*. London: Printed by Thomas Harper for John Waterson, 1639.

Behn, Aphra. *The Emperor of the Moon, a Farce*. London: Printed by R. Holt, for Joseph Knight, and Francis Saunders, 1687.

---. *The Widdow Ranter*. London: James Knapton, 1690.

Belleforest, Francois. *Second tome des histoires tragiques, extraites de l'italien de Bandel.* Paris: Robert le Magnier, 1566.

Bensérade, Isaac de. "Ballet royal de Psyché." *Les contemporains de Molière: recueil de comédies, rares ou peu connues, jouées de 1650 à 1680, Tome deuxième*, edited by Victor Fournel, Paris: Firmin Didot Frères, Fils, et Compagnie, 1866, pp. 406-436.

Berkeley, William. *The Lost Lady, a Tragy Comedy.* London: By Io. Okes, for Iohn Colby, 1638.

Best, George. *A True Discourse of the Late Voyages of Discoverie for the Finding of a Passage to Cathaya.* London: Imprinted by Henry Bynnyman, 1578.

Blome, Richard. *A Description of the Island of Jamaica With the Other Isles and Territories in America to which the English are Related*. London: Dorman Newman, 1678.

Bodin, Jean. *Les Six livres de la République*. Paris: chez Jacques du Puys, 1577.

Boursault, Edmé. *Le Mort vivant.* Paris: Nicolas Pépingue, 1662.

Boutade des Mores Esclaves d'Amour délivrés par Bacchus. 1609.

Brome, Richard. *A joviall Crew, or, The Merry Beggars Presented in a Comedie at Drury-Lane, in the Yeer 1641.* London: Printed by J.Y. for E.D. and N.E., 1652.

---. *The Damoiselle, or, The New Ordinary, a Comedy*. London: Printed by T.R. for Richard Marriott and Thomas Dring, 1653.

---. *The English Moor, or the Mock-Marriage*, *a Comedy*. London: Printed by J.T. for A.C. and Henry Broom, 1658.

---. *The Northern Lasse a Comoedie*. London: August Mathewes, 1632.

Calderón de la Barca, Pedro. "Las carnestolendas." *Entremeses, jácaras y mojigangas.* Madrid, Castalia, 1983, pp. 139-155.

---. *La sibila del Oriente y gran reyna de Saba*. En Madrid: por Francisco Sanz, 1682.

---. "Mojiganga de la pandera." "Un códice de teatro desconocido del siglo XVII. Edición de la mojiganga 'La pandera' de Calderón" written by María Luisa Lobato. *Criticón*, vol. 37, 1987, pp. 169-201.

Castiglione, Baldesar. *The Book of the Courtier, The Singleton Translation,* edited by Daniel Javitch, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002.

Cervantes Saavedra, Miguel de. *El celoso extremeño, Novelas exemplares.* Madrid: por Juan de la Cuesta, 1613.

---. "Los mirones." *Varias obras inéditas de Cervantes*, edited by Don Adolfo de Castro, Madrid: A. de Carlos e Hijo, 1874, pp. 23-88.

---. *Ocho comedias, y ocho entremeses nuevos, nunca representados*. En Madrid: por la viuda de Alonso Martin: a costa de Iuan de Villarroel, 1615.

Chapman, George. *The Blinde Begger of Alexandria Most Pleasantly Discoursing his Variable Humours in Disguised Shapes Full of Conceite and Pleasure.* London: printed by J. Roberts for William Jones, 1598.

---. *The Memorable Maske of the Two Honorable Houses or Innes of Court; the Middle Temple, and Lyncolns Inne.* London: Printed by G. Eld for George Norton, 1613.

Chrétien des Croix, Nicolas. *Les Portugaiz Infortunez, Tragédie. Les Tragédies de N. Chrétien sieur des Croix, Argentenois,* Rouen: Théodore Reinsart, 1608, pp 1-126.

Claramonte, Andrés de. *El valiente negro en Flandes*. Barcelona: en la Emprenta de Jayme Romeu, a costa de Juan Sapera, 1638.

Code Noir (Ordonnance de mars 1685 sur les esclaves des îles de l'Amérique). Versailles, 1685.

Colletet, Guillaume. *Le Ballet de la marine.* Paris: A. de Sommaville, 1635.

"Contract between the city council and Hernando Mallén." *Archivo de Contaduría y Junta de Propios*, Sección II, Carpeta 3, documento 77, 1624. Archivo Municipal de Sevilla, Spain.

"Contract between the city council and Hernando Rivera." *Archivo de Contaduría y Junta de Propios*, Sección II, Carpeta 2, documento 24*,* 1622. Archivo Municipal de Sevilla, Spain.

Corneille, Thomas. *L'Inconnu, comédie*. Paris: chez Jean Ribou, 1675.

Cotgrave, Randle. *A Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues.* London: Adam Islip, 1611.

Covarrubias Orozco, Sebastián de. *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o Española.* Madrid: Luis Sanchez, 1611.

Davenant, William. *The History of Sir Francis Drake*. London: Printed for Henry Herringman, 1659.

"Death certificate of Hernando de Rivera's son." Libro 1, 1609, f.169. San Esteban Parish, Seville, Spain.

Dekker, Thomas. *The Pleasant Comedie of Old Fortunatus, As it Was Plaied before the Queenes Maiestie this Christmas.* London: Printed by S. Stafford for William Aspley, 1600.

---. *The Shomakers Holiday. Or The Gentle Craft, With the Humorous Life of Simon Eyre, Shoomaker, and Lord Maior of London.* London: Printed by Valentine Sims, 1600.

Duhamel, Georges. *Acoubar ou la loyauté trahie, tirée des amours de Pistion et Fortunie en leur voyage de Canada.* Rouen: Raphaël du Petit-Val, 1611.

Eine sehr klaegliche Tragoedia Von Tito Andronico une der Hoffertigen Kayserin. *Englische Comedien und Tragedien: das ist, sehr schoene, herrliche und ausserlesene geist- und weltliche Comedi und Tragedi Spiel*. Leipzig: 1620. PR 1246 G5 E59 Cage. Folger Shakespeare Library.

"Entremés de la negra lectora." *Arcadia de entremeses escritos por los ingenious mas clasicos de España*, Madrid: Ángel Pasqual Rubio, 1723, pp. 164-175.

"Entremés de las naciones." *Arcadia de entremeses escritos por los ingenios mas clasicos de España, Primera parte*. Pamplona: Juan Micon, 1691, pp. 22-33.

"Entremés del sacristan hechizero." *Floresta de entremeses y rasgos del ocio a differentes assumptos de bayles y mogigangas. Escritos por las mejores plumas de Nuestra España,* Madrid: Viuda de Joseph Fernandez de Buendia*,* 1680, pp. 192-2013.

"Entremés septimo: los negros de Santo Tomé." *Collección de Entremeses, Loas, Bailes, Jácaras y Mojigangas, desde fines del siglo XVI á mediados del XVIII,* Vol.1, edited by Emilio Cotarelo y Mori, Madrid: Casa Editorial Bailly Bailliére, 1911, pp.136-138.

Esquivel Navarro, Juan de, *Discursos sobre el arte del danzado y sus excelencias y primer origen, reprobando las acciones deshonestas*. Sevilla: por Juan Gomez de Blas, 1642.

Famosa jácara nueva en que se da cuenta y declara el más fiero delito que se ha visto en nuestros tiempos… sucedido en el termino de Ciudad Real, el qual cometió vn Negro que andava en esta Corte vailando el zarambeque . . . que se llamava Francisco Meneses . . . el dia 6 de Iunio este año de 1687.

Famous History of the Life and Death of Captain Thomas Stukeley. London: Thomas Pavier, 1605.

Farsa del triunfo del sacramento. *Códice de autos viejos,* 1550-1575 (?) Ms 14711 Biblioteca Nacional de España.

Furetière, Antoine. *Dictionnaire universel, contenant généralement tous les mots françois tant vieux que modernes, et les termes de toutes les sciences et des arts*. Den Haag & Rotterdam: Arnoud et Reinier Leers, 1690.

García de Resende. *Cancioneiro geral.* Lixboa: per Hermã de Cãmpos, 1516.

Garcilaso de la Vega, Inca. *Primera parte de los comentarios reales*. Lisbon: Pedro Crasbeeck, 1609.

Godínez, Felipe. *El coloquio Segundo de los pastores de Belen. Autos sacramentales con quatro comedias nuevas y sus loas y entremeses, Primera parte.* Madrid: Maria de Quiñones, 1655, pp. 141r-146v.

Góngora, Luis de. "En la fiesta del Santísimo Sacramento." *El tema del negro en cantos, bailes, y villancicos de los siglos XVI y XVII*, edited by Horacio Jorge Becco, Buenos Aires: Ollantay, 1951, pp. 35-40.

"Grand bal de la douairière de Billebahaut." *Ballets et Mascarades de Cour de Henri III à Louis XIV (1581-1652), Tome troisième*, edited by Paul Lacroix, Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1968, pp. 151-202.

"Grand bal des effets de la nature." *Ballets et Mascarades de Cour de Henri III à Louis XIV (1581-1652), Tome quatrième,* edited by Paul Lacroix, Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1968, pp. 191-206.

"Guineo." *Diccionario de autoridades Tomo IV (1734).* 18 March 2017. web.frl.es/DA.html

Hakluyt, Richard. *A Discourse Concerning Western Planting, Written in the Year 1584 by Richard Hakluyt; Now First Printed from a Contemporary Manuscript*, with a Preface and an Introduction by Leonard Woods, ed., with Notes in the Appendix by Charles Deane. Cambridge [Mass.]: Press of J. Wilson, 1877.

Hardy, Alexandre. *Les chastes et loyales amours de Théagène et Cariclée réduites du grec de l'Histoire d'Héliodore en huict poèmes dragmatiques ou théâtres consécutifs*. Paris: Jacques Quesnel, 1623.

Haughton, William. *Englishmen for my Money: or, A pleasant Comedy, called, A Woman will Haue her Will*. London: By W. White, 1616.

Heminges, William. *The Fatal Contract, a French Tragedy.* Printed at London for J. M., 1653.

Herbert, Thomas. *A Relation of some Yeares Trauaile Begunne anno 1626. Into Afrique and the Greater Asia, especially the Territories of the Persian Monarchie: and some Parts of the Orientall Indies, and Iles Adiacent.* London: Printed by William Stansby, and Iacob Bloome, 1634.

Hilliard, Nicholas. *Nicholas Hilliard's Art of Limning,* transcribed by Arthur F. Kinney; edited by Linda Bradley Salamon; prefaced by Sir John Pope-Hennessy, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1983.

Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*, *The English and Latin Texts*, *The Clarendon Edition of the Works of Thomas Hobbes*, edited by Noel Malcolm. Vol. 4. Oxford University Press, 2012.

Indagine, Johannes ab. *Briefe Introductions ... unto the Arts of Chiromancy ... and Physiognomy*. London: John Daye, 1558.

Jonson, Benjamin. *The alchemist.* London: Printed by Thomas Snodham, for Walter Burre, 1612.

---. "The Irish Masque at Court." *The Sad Shepherd, The Fall of Mortimer, Masques and Entertainments*, edited by C. H. Herford, Percy Simpson and Evelyn Simpson, Ben Jonson. Vol. 7, Oxford University Press, 1941, pp. 399-406.

---. "The Masque of Blackness." *The Sad Shepherd, The Fall of Mortimer, Masques and Entertainments*, edited by C. H. Herford, Percy Simpson and Evelyn Simpson, Ben Jonson. Vol. 7, Oxford University Press, 1941, pp.161-202.

Kemp, William. *Kemp's Nine Days Wonder, Performed in a daunce from London to Norwich.* London: Printed by E. Allde for Nicholas Ling, 1600.

Labat, Jean-Baptiste. *Nouveau voyage aux isles de l'Amérique. Tome second*. La Haye: P. Husson, T. Johnson, P. Gosse, J. Van Duren, R. Alberts, et C. Le Vier, 1724.

Lanini, Francisco. "Los gorrones." *Migaxas del ingenio y apacible entretenimiento en varios entremeses, bayles, y loas escogidos de los mejores ingenios de España,* Zaragoza: Diego Dormer . . . a costo de Juan Martinez de Ribera Martel, 1660-1670 (?), fol. 18-23.

Lasso di, Orlando. *Libro de villanelle, moresche, et altre canzoni*. Paris: Chez Adrien Leroy et Robert Ballard, 1581.

Latino, Juan. *Austrias carmen de excellentissimi domini D. Ioannis ab Austria, . . . re benè gesta in victoria mirabili eiusdem Philippi aduersus perfidos Turcas parta*. Madrid: Hugonis de Mena, 1573.

Lauze, François de. *Apologie de la danse, et la parfaite méthode de l'enseigner tant aux cavaliers qu'aux dames*. 1623.

L'Estoille, Claude de. *Ballet du naufrage heureux.* 1626.

Ligon, Richard. *A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados*. London: Humphrey Moseley, 1657.

Lope de Vega y Carpio, Félix. *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias en este tiempo*, edited by Juan Manuel Rozas, Alicante: Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes, 2003.

---. *El nacimiento de Cristo*. *Obras de Lope de Vega. Vol. III Autos y coloquios II,* edited by Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo. Madrid, Atlas, 1963, pp. 225-251.

---. *El negro del mejor amo*, edited by Jose Fredera Lebrera, Madrid: Universidad de Educación a Distancia, 1984.

---. *El premio de bien hablar y volver por las mujeres*. Sevilla: Francisco de Leefdael, s. a.

---. *El santo negro Rosambuco de la ciudad de Palermo*. En Barcelona: en casa de Sebastian de Cormellas . . . Vendese en Zaragoza: en casa de Iayme Gotar, 1612.

---. *La limpieza no manchada*, *Parte diecinueve y la major parte de las comedias de Lope de Vega Carpio*. En Madrid: por Juan Gonzalez: a costa de Alfonso Pérez, 1624.

---. *La vitoria de la honra.* Madrid, por la viuda de Alonso Martin, a costa de Diego Logroño, 1635.

---. *Los peligros de la ausencia.* En Zaragoza: por Pedro Verges, 1641.

---. *Servir a señor discreto.* En Barcelona: por Sebastian de Cormellas, y à su costa, 1618.

López de Armesto, Gil. "Entremés de los nadadores de Sevilla y de Triana." *Saynetes y entremeses representados y cantados compuestos por Don Gil Lopez de Armesto y Castro*, En Madrid: por Roque Rico de Miranda, a costa de Gregorio Rodriguez, 1674, pp. 8-13.

Mal Lara, Juan de. *La Filosofia vulgar de Juan de Mal Lara, vezino de Sevilla*, *Refranes o proverbios en romance…y la Filosofia vulgar de Juan de Mal Lara.* En Madrid: por Juan de la Cuesta, 1619.

Marees, Peter de. *Description et récit historial du riche royaume d'or de Guinea*. Amsterdam: Cornille Claesson, 1605.

Marlowe, Christopher. *Lust's Dominion, or the Lascivious Queen, a Tragedie.* London: Francis Kirkman, 1657.

---. *Tamburlaine the Great, who, from a Scythian Shephearde, by his Rare and Woonderfull Conquests, Became a Most Puissant and Mightye Monarque.* London: Printed by Richard Ihones, 1590.

Marmol Carvajal, Luis de. *Rebellión y castigo de los Moriscos del Reino de Granada. Biblioteca de autores españoles desde la formación del lenguaje hasta nuestros dias, Historiadores de sucesos particulares*, edited by Don Cayetano Rosell, *Tomo primero*, Madrid: Imprenta y esterotipía de M. de Ribadeneyra, 1852, pp. 123-365.

Marriage record for Hernando Rivera. *Bodas: 1601-1609,* AGAS Fundo paroquial del Salvador, I, 2, 1, Libro 06. Biblioteca Colombina, Seville, Spain.

Marston, John. The *Wonder of Women or The Tragedie of Sophonisba as it Hath Beene Sundry Times Acted at the Blacke Friers.* London: Printed by John Windet, 1606.

Mason, John, *The Turke, A Worthie Tragedie*. London: Printed by Edward Allde for John Busbie, 1610.

Massinger, Philip. *Believe as You List*. *The Plays of Philip Massinger, From the Text of William Gifford*, edited by Francis Cunningham, London: John Camden Hotten, 1868, pp. 595-625.

---. *The Bondman*, *an Antient Story, As it Hath Been Often Acted with Good Allowance, at the Cock-pit in Drury-lane: by the Most Excellent Princesse, the Lady Elizabeth her Seruants*. London: Printed by Edward Allde, for John Harison and Edward Blackmore, 1624.

---. *The Parliament of Love. The Plays of Philip Massinger, From the Text of William Gifford*, edited by Francis Cunningham, London: John Camden Hotten, 1868, pp. 166-193.

Matos Fragoso, Juan de. *El yerro del entendido, Primera parte de comedias de Don Juan de Matos Fragoso.* Madrid: Juan Paredes, 1658.

Ménestrier, Claude-François. *Des ballets anciens et modernes selon les règles du théâtre*. Paris: chez René Guignard, 1682.

Mersenne, Marin. *Harmonie universelle, contenant la théorie et la pratique de la musique.* Paris: chez Sébastien Cramoisy, 1636.

Middleton, Thomas. *The Triumphs of Truth*. London: Printed by Nicholas Okes, 1613.

Minsheu, John. *A Dictionarie in Spanish and English, First Published into the English Tongue by Ric. Percivale Gentleman, Now Enlarged.* London: Edm. Bollifant, 1599.

Miracles de Nostre Dame par personages. Fourteenth century. Ms. 819-820. Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

Mira de Amescua, Antonio. *El negro de mejor amo. Laurel de comedias. Quarta parte de diferentes autores,* Madrid: Imprenta real, 1653, pp. 1-36.

Monet, Philibert. *Invantaire des deux langues françoise et latine*, *assorti des plus utiles curiositez de l'un et de l'autre idiome.* Lyon: chez Claude Obert, 1636.

Montalbán, Juan Perez de. *Teágenes y Clariquea.* En Madrid: en la Imprenta del Reyno: a costa de Alonso Perez de Montalvan, librero de su magestad y padre del autor, 1638.

Moreto, Augustín. *La negra por el honor*. Madrid: por Domingo Garcia Morràs, a costa de Domingo Palacio y Villegas, 1668.

Motteux, Pierre. *The Island Princess, or, The generous Portuguese made into an opera, as it is performed at the Theatre Royal*. London: Printed for Richard Wellington, 1699.

Mulato de Huescar (El), Sainete. Madrid: 1656. Ms. 17.205. Biblioteca Nacional de España.

Navarre, Marguerite de. *Comédie de l'adoration des trois rois à Jésus-Christ*. *Marguerites de la Marguerite des princesses, très illustre Royne de Navarre*, Lyon: Jean de Tournes, 1647.

Nebrija, Elio Antonio de. *Vocabulario español-latino*. Salamanca, 1495 (?).

Nicholas, Philip. *Sir Francis Drake Revived, Calling upon this Dull or Effeminate Age, to Folowe his Noble Steps for Golde & Siluer.* London: Printed by Edward Allde for Nicholas Bourne, 1626.

Nicot, Jean. *Thrésor de la langue francoyse, tant ancienne que moderne.* Paris: chez David Douceur, 1606.

Nueva relación y curioso romance, en que se refiere la celebridad, galanteo y acaso de una Boda de Negros, que se executó en la Ciudad del Puerto de Santa Maria. Sevilla: por Joseph Padrino. Date Unknown.

Orrery, Lionel Earl of. *Guzman, a Comedy, Acted at the Theatre Royal*. London: Printed for Francis Saunders, 1693.

Ortiz de Zúñiga, Diego. *Anales eclesiásticos y seculares de la muy noble y muy leal ciudad de Sevilla, metrópolis de la Andalucia, Tomo IV*. Madrid: Imprenta Real, 1677.

Oudin, César. *Refranes o proverbios españoles traduzidos en lengua Francesa; Proverbes espagnols traduits en françois*. Lyon: Pierre Rigaud, 1614.

---. *Tesoro de las dos lenguas francesa y española. Thrésor des deux langues françoise et espagnolle: Auquel est contenue l'explication de toutes les deux respectivement l'une par l'autre*. Paris: chez Marc Orry, 1607.

Pacheco, Rodrigo. *El negro del serafin. Comedias famosas compuestas por don Rodrigo Pacheco, lusitano, vecino de la ciudad de Granada*. 1642, h.167-187v. Ms 14824. Biblioteca Nacional de España.

Peele, George. *The Battell of Alcazar Fought in Barbarie, betweene Sebastian king of Portugall, and Abdelmelec king of Marocco, With the Death of Captaine Stukeley. As it was Sundrie Times Plaid by the Lord High Admirall his Seruant.* London: by Edward Allde for Richard Bankworth, 1594.

---. *The Famous Chronicle of King Edward the First, Sirnamed Edward Longshankes with his Returne from the Holy Land. Also the Life of Lleuellen Rebell in Wales. Lastly, the Sinking of Queene Elinor, who Sunck at Charingcrosse, and Rose againe at Pottershith, now named Queenehith.* London: Printed by Abell Ieffes, 1593.

Perche, Nicolas du. *L'Ambassadeur d'Affrique.* Moulins: Chez la veuve Pierre Vernoy et Claude Vernoy son fils, Imprimeur du Roy, 1666.

"Petition addressed to the Archbishop of Seville by the confraternity of Nuestra Señora de la Antigua Siete Dolores against the black confraternity of Nuestra Señora de los Angeles." ACS, Caja 9885, Expediente 1, 1604. Biblioteca Colombina, Seville, Spain.

Pontano, Giovanni. *De Obediencia.* Naples, 1480-1494. Universitat de València, Biblioteca Històrica BH Ms. 52. Valencia, Spain.

"Pour des masques assez hideux et sauvages." *Ballets et Mascarades de Cour de Henri III à Louis XIV (1581-1652), Tome premier*, edited by Paul Lacroix, Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1968, pp. 155-156.

Pure, Michel de. *Idées des spectacles anciens et nouveaux.* Paris: chez Michel Brunet, 1668.

Puttenham, George. *The Art of English Poesy*, edited by Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn, Cornell University Press, 2007.

Quevedo, Francisco de. "Boda de negros." *El tema del negro en cantos, bailes, y villancicos de los siglos XVI y XVII*, edited by Horacio Jorge Becco, Buenos Aires: Ollantay, 1951, pp. 43-46.

---. "Premática del tiempo." *Obras de Francisco de Quevedo Villegas, Tomo primero,* En Amberes: por Henrico y Cornelio Verdussen, 1699, pp. 530-537.

Quiñones de Benavente, Luis. "El borracho, entremés famoso." *Jocoseria. Burlas veras, o reprehension moral, y festiua de los desordenes publicos, en doze entremeses representados, y veinte y quatro cantados*, Madrid: por Francisco García, 1645, pp. 159v-168r.

---. *El negrito hablador y sin color anda la niña*. *Navidad y Corpus Christi, festejados por los mejores ingenios de España en diez y seis autos a lo divino, diez y seis loas y diez y seis entremeses: representados en esta corte y nunca hasta aora impressos recogidos por Isidro de Robles, natural de Madrid*, Madrid: por Joseph Fernández de Buendía. A costa de Isidro de Robles, 1664, pp. 128-132.

---. "Las Dueñas." *Jocoseria. Burlas veras, o reprehension moral, y festiua de los desordenes publicos, en doze entremeses representados, y veinte y quatro cantados*, Madrid: por Francisco García, 1645, pp. 168v-172v.

Rabelais, Francois. *Le Quart livre des faicts et dicts héroïques du bon Pantagruel.* Paris: Michel Fezeandar, 1552.

Ravenscroft, Edward. *The Citizen Turn'd Gentleman, Acted at the Duke's Theatre.* London: Printed for Thomas Dring, 1672.

Ray, J. *A Collection of English Proverbs*. Cambridge: Printed by John Hayes for W. Morden,

1676.

*"*Real Cédula," 1547. SANTO_DOMINGO, 868, L.2, F.322V. Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Spain.

"Real Cédula a la Audiencia de Santo Domingo" ("*Cofradías de negros en la iglesia de Santo Domingo*"), 1612. SANTO_DOMINGO, 869, L.6, F.154V. Archivo General de Indias, Seville, Spain.

Reynosa, Rodrigo de. *Comienzan unas coplas a los negros y negras y de como se motejavan en Seville un negro de gelofe mandinga contra una negra de guinea.* Burgos: Juan de Junta, circa 1535.

Riolan Fils, Jean. *Anthropographia.* Paris: Apud Hadrianum Perier, 1618.

Rochefort, Charles de. *Histoire naturelle et morale des îles Antilles de l'Amérique.* Roterdam: chez Arnould Leers, 1658.

Rojas Villandrando, Agustín de. *El viaje entretenido de Agustín de Rojas, Natural de la villa de Madrid, Reproducción de la primera edición de 1604. Libros primero y segundo*. Con un estudio crítico por Don Manuel Cañete, Madrid: M. Rodríguez Serra, editor, 1901.

Rowley, William. *A Tragedy Called All's Lost by Lust*. London: Printed by Thomas Harper, 1633.

Sandoval, Alonso de. *De instauranda aethiopum salute*. En Madrid: por Alonso de Paredes, 1647.

---. *Naturaleza, policia sagrada y profana, costumbres y ritos, disciplina y catechismo evangelico de todos Etiopes*. En Sevilla: por Francisco de Lira, 1627.

Settle, Elkanah. *The Empress of Morocco*. London: Printed for William Cademan, 1673.

Shakespeare, William. *Love's Labor's Lost*. *The Norton Shakespeare,* edited by Stephen Greenblatt (general editor), Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, Katharine Eisaman Maus, New York: W.W. Norton, 2008, pp. pp. 767-836.

---. *The Life of Henry V*. *The Norton Shakespeare*, edited by Stephen Greenblatt (general editor), Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, Katharine Eisaman Maus, New York: W.W. Norton, 2008, pp. 1471-1548.

---. *The Most Lamentable Tragedy of Titus Andronicus*. *The Norton Shakespeare*, edited by Stephen Greenblatt (general editor), Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, Katharine Eisaman Maus, New York: W.W. Norton, 2008, pp. 399-464.

---. *The Tempest*. *The Norton Shakespeare*, edited by Stephen Greenblatt (general editor), Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, Katharine Eisaman Maus, New York: W.W. Norton, 2008, pp. 3055-3116.

---. *The Tragedy of King Lear: a Conflated Text*. *The Norton Shakespeare,* edited by Stephen Greenblatt (general editor), Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, Katharine Eisaman Maus, New York: W.W. Norton, 2008, pp. 2493-2568.

---. *The Tragedy of Othello, The Moor of Venice*. *The Norton Shakespeare,* edited by Stephen Greenblatt (general editor), Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, Katharine Eisaman Maus, New York: W.W. Norton, 2008, pp. 2109-2192.

Southerne, Thomas. *Oroonoko, a Tragedy, As Is Acted at the Theatre Royal*. London: Printed for H. Playford, B. Tooke, and S. Buckley, 1696.

Suárez de Deza y Avila, Vicente. "El galeote mulato." *Parte primera de los donayres de Tersícore*, En Madrid: por Melchor Sánchez, a costa de Mateo de la Bastida, 1663, pp. 146r-148v.

The Holy Bible: King James Version. London: Robert Barker, 1611.

Thévet, André. *Cosmographie Universelle*, *Tome premier*. Paris: chez Guillaume Chaudière, 1575.

Thiboust, Jacques. "L'Ordre de la triomphante et magnifique monstre du mystère des saints actes des Apôtres faite à Bourges le dimanche dernier jour d'avril 1536." *Relation de la monstre du mystère des saints actes des Apôtres et faits divers,* edited by M. Labouvrie, Bourges: Imprimerie en caractères et lithographie de Manceron, 1836, pp. 17-63.

Tirso de Molina. "El negro, entremés famoso." *Segunda parte de las comedias del maestro Tirso de Molina*, Madrid: en la Imprenta del Reino, 1635, pp. 284-286.

Tragédie françoize d'un more cruel envers son seigneur nommé Riviery, gentilhomme espagnol, sa demoiselle et ses enfants. Rouen: Abraham Cousturier, 1613.

Tryon, Thomas. *Friendly Advice to the Gentlemen-Planters of the East and West Indies*. London: Andrew Sowle, 1684.

Vélez de Guevara, Luis. *El Diablo cojuelo*. Madrid: Imprenta Real, a costa de Alonso Pérez, 1641.

---. *El santo negro Rosambue o El negro del Serafín; comedia en tres jornadas*. 1643. Ms. 17.317. Biblioteca Nacional de España.

---. *Virtudes vencen señales*, edited by William R. Manson and C. George, Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 2010.

Vicente, Gil. "Fragoa d'Amor." *Obras de Gil Vicente, com revisao, prefacio e notas de Mendes dos Remedios, Tomo Segundo*, Coimbra: França Amado Editor, 1912, pp. 153-172.

"Villanzicos y chanzonetas que se cantaron en el Coro de la Santa Iglesia Mayor de Sevilla, a la venida de los santos Reyes a Belen, recien nacido Jesu Christo, celebrada esto año de 1644." Sevilla: Simon Fajardos, 1644.

Villaviciosa, Sebastián de. "Entremés de los sones." *Tardes apacibles de gustoso entretenimiento: repartidas en varios entremeses, y bayles entremesados escogidos de los mejores ingenios de España*, Madrid: por Andrés García de la Iglesia: a costa de Iuan Martin Merinero, 1663, pp. 134r-137v.

Vos, Jan. *Aran en Titus: of Wraak en Weerwraak, Treurspel*. Amsterdam: Aeltje Verwou, 1641.

Webster, John. *The White Divel*, o*r The tragedy of Paulo Giordano Ursini, Duke of Brachiano with the Life and Death of Vittoria Corombona the Famous Venetian curtizan*. London: Printed by Nicholas Okes for Thomas Archer, 1612.

Weiditz, Christoph. *Trachtenbuch*. 1535, watercolor on paper, Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nürnberg.

Whitaker, William. *The Conspiracy, or, The change of Government, a Tragedy acted at His Royal Highness the Duke of Yorks Theatre.* London: Printed for William Cademan, 1680.

Ximénez de Enciso, Diego. C*omedia famosa de Juan Latino.* Madrid: en la Imprenta Real, acosta de Antonio Ribero, 1652.

Zayas y Sotomayor, María. *Novelas ejemplares y amorosas de doña María de Zayas y Sotomayor: primera y segunda parte*. *Colección de los mejores autores expañoles, Tomo 35*, Paris: Baudry Libreria Europea, 1847.

2) SECONDARY SOURCES

Aasand, Hardin. "'To Blanch an Ethiop, and Revive a Corpse': Queen Anne and *The Masque of Blackness.*" *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, vol. 32, no. 2, 1992, pp. 271-285.

Almeida de Souza, Juliana Beatriz. "Las Casas, Sandoval, and the Defense of Black Slavery." *Topoi, Revista de História*, vol. 2, 2006.

Almeida Mendes, Antonio de. "The Foundations of the System: A Reassessment of the Slave Trade to the Spanish Americas in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries." *Extending the Frontiers: Essays on the New Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*, edited by David Eltis and David Richardson, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008, pp. 63-92.

Amelang, James S. "Exchanges Between Italy and Spain: Culture and Religion." *Spain in Italy: Politics, Society, and Religion 1500-1700,* edited by Thomas James Dandelet, and John A. Marino, Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007, pp. 433-455.

Amétis, Emeline. "*Le fait de se grimer en noir est raciste en France aussi.*" *Slate France*, 23 Nov. 16. www.slate.fr/story/129269/blackface-histoire-france.

Amussen, Susan Dwyer. *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in early Modern England*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1983.

Andrea, Bernadette. "Black Skin, The Queen's Masques: Africanist Ambivalence and Feminine Author(ity) in the Masques of 'Blackness' and 'Beauty'." *English Literary Renaissance*, vol. 29, no. 2, 1999, pp. 246-281.

Anidjar, Gil. *Blood, A Critique of Christianity.* Columbia University Press, 2014.

"Antic, adj. and n." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, March 2017. Web. 18 March 2017.

Appiah, Kwame Anthony. "Race, Culture, Identity: Misunderstood Connections." The Tanner Lectures of Human Values, October 1994, UC San Diego. 53-136.

Ares Queija, Berta. "La Cuestión del bautismo de los Negros en el siglo XVII: la proyección de un debate Americano." *Mirando las dos orillas: intercambios mercantiles, sociales y culturales entre Andalucía y América*, edited by Enriqueta Vila Vilar and Jaime J. Lacueva Muñoz, Sevilla: Fundación Buenas Letras, 2012, pp. 469-485.

Aubert, Guillaume. "The Blood of France: Race and Purity of Blood in the French Atlantic World." *William and Mary Quarterly,* vol. 61, no. 3, 2004, pp. 439-478.

Baker, David J. *Between Nations: Shakespeare, Spenser, Marvell, and the Question of Britain.* Stanford University Press, 1997.

---. "Wildehirissheman: Colonialist Representation in Shakespeare's *Henry V*." *English Literary Renaissance*, 22:1 (1992), pp. 37-61.

Bakhtin, Mikhail. *Rabelais and his World*, translated by Helene Iswolsky, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1968.

Balibar, Etienne. "Racism and Nationalism." *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, translated by Chris Turner, New York: Verso, 1991, pp. 37-63.

Baranda Leturio, Consolación. "Las hablas de negros. Origenes de un personaje literario." *Revista de Filología Española,* vol. 69, no. 3/4, 1989, pp. 311-335.

Bartels, Emily C. "Too Many Blackamoors: Deportation, Discrimination, and Elizabeth I." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, vol. 46, no. 2, 2006, pp. 305-322.

Barthelemy, Anthony Gerard. *Black Face, Maligned Race: the Representation of Blacks in English Drama from Shakespeare to Southerne.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1987.

Becco, Horacio Jorge, ed. *El tema del negro en cantos, bailes y villancicos de los siglos XVI y XVII*. Buenos Aires: Ollantay, 1951.

Bennett, Herman L. *Africans in Colonial Mexico: Absolutism, Christianity, and Afro-Creole Consciousness, 1570-1640*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003.

Berghaus, Gunther. "Neoplatonic and Pythagorean Notions of World Harmony and Unity and Their Influence on Renaissance Dance Theory." *Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research*, vol. 10, no. 2, 1992, pp. 43-70.

Bergson, Henri. *Le Rire, essai sur la signification du comique.* Paris: Éditions Alcan, 1924.

Beusterien, John. *An Eye on Race: Perspectives from Theater in Imperial Spain*. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2006.

Beyoncé. "Formation." *Lemonade,* Parkwood Entertainment, 2016. www.beyonce.com/album/lemonade-visual-album/.

Biet, Christian. "L'Afrique à l'envers où à l'endroit des Cafres: Tragédie et récit de voyage." *L'Afrique au XVIIe siècle: Mythes et réalités,* Actes du VII colloque du Centre International de Rencontres sur le XVII siècle, Tunis, 14-16 mars 2002, edited by Bournaz, Alia Baccar.Tübingen: Narr, 2003, pp. 371-403.

---. ed. *Théâtre de la cruauté et récits sanglants en France (XVIe-XVIIe siècle).* Paris: Editions Robert Laffont, 2006.

Bindman, David, and Henry Louis Gates Jr. eds. *The Image of the Black in Western Art, Volume III*, Parts 1-3. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011.

Blackburn, Robin. *The Making of New World Slavery, from the Baroque to the Modern, 1492-1800*. London: Verso, 1997.

Blainey, W. M. "The Alleged Popularity of Playbooks." *Shakespeare Quarterly*, vol. 56, no. 1, 2005, pp. 33-50.

Blakely, Allison. *Blacks in the Dutch World: The Evolution of Racial Imagery in a Modern Society*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993.

Blank, Paula. *Broken English: Dialects and the Politics of Language in Renaissance Writings*. London; New York: Routledge, 1996.

Bloechl, Olivia A. *Native American Song at the Frontiers of Early Modern Music*. Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Boose, Linda. "The Getting of a Lawful Race." *Women, Race and Writing in the Early Modern Period*, edited by Hendricks, Margo and Patricia Parker, London: Routledge, 1994, pp. 35-54.

Borge, Francisco J. "'We (upon Peril of my Life) Shall Make the Spaniards Ridiculous to All Europe': Richard Hakluyt's Discourse of Spain." *Richard Hakluyt and Travel Writing in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Daniel Carey and Claire Jowitt, New York: Routledge, 2012, pp. 165-228.

Boucher, Philip B. *France and the American Tropics to 1700: Tropics of Discontent?* Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2008.

Boulle, Pierre. *Race et esclavage dans la France de l'ancien régime*. Paris: Perrin, 2007.

Bourdieu, Pierre. *Language and Symbolic Power*, edited and introduced by John B. Thompson; translated by Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson, Cambridge: Polity, 1991.

Bovilsky, Lara. "Black beauties, White Devils: The English Italian in Milton and Webster." *ELH*, vol. 70, no.3, 2003, pp. 625-651.

Branche, Jerome. *Colonialism and Race in Luso-Spanish Literature*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006.

Bravo Lozano, Jesús. "Mulos y esclavos. Madrid, 1670." *Cuadernos de historia moderna y contemporánea,* vol.1, 1980, pp. 11-30.

Brooks, Lynn Matluck."Text and Image as Evidence for Posture and Movement Style in Seventeenth Century Spain." *Imago Musicae,* vol. 13, 1996, pp. 39-61.

---. *The Dances of the Processions of Seville in Spain's Golden Age*. Kassel: Ed. Reichenberger, 1988.

Brotherton, John. *The 'Pastor-Bobo in the Spanish Theatre, Before the Time of Lope de Vega.* London: Tamesis, 1975.

Callaghan, Dympna. *Shakespeare Without Women: Representing Gender and Race on the Renaissance Stage*. New York: Routledge, 2000.

Calvo Lozano, María Paz, and Ursula de Luis-André Quattelbaum. "Dinámica de la población, 1560-1804." *Madrid, Atlas historico de la ciudad, siglos IX-XIX*, edited by Virgilio Pinto Crespo, and Santos Madrazo Madrazo, Madrid: Lundwerg editors, S.A., 1995, pp. 146-149.

Camacho Martínez, Ignacio. *La Hermandad de los Mulatos de Sevilla: antecedentes históricos de la Hermandad del Calvario*. Sevilla: Área de cultura, Ayuntamiento de Sevilla, 1998.

Cardamone, Donna G. "The Salon as Marketplace in the 1550s: Patrons and Collectors of Lasso's Secular Music." *Orlando di Lasso Studies*, edited by Peter Bergquist, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. 64-90.

Carmen Fernández Ortiz, María del. *El habla de negros en el teatro breve de los siglos de oro*. Memoria de licenciatura, Universidad de Córdoba, 1995.

Chalaye, Sylvie. *Du Noir au Nègre: L'image du Noir au théâtre (1550-1960).* Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998.

Chaouche, Sabine. *L'art du comédien: déclamation et jeu scénique en France à l'âge classique (1629-1680).* Paris: Honoré Champion, 2001.

Charara, Youmna ed. *Fictions coloniales du XVIIIe siècle*. Paris, France: Harmattan, 2005.

Chasca, Edmund de. "The Phonology of the Speech of the Negroes in Early Spanish Drama." *Hispanic Review,* vol. 14, no. 4, 1946, pp. 322—339.

Checca, Peter Anthony. "The Role of the Devil in Golden Age Drama." Dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, 1975.

Chevalier Micki, Sybile. "Tragédie et théâtre Rouennais, 1566-1640: Scénographies de la cruauté." Dissertation, Université Paris X- Nanterre, 2013.

Clayton, Lawrence. "Bartolomé de las Casas and the African Slave Trade." *History Compass,* vol. 7, no. 6, 2009, pp. 1526—1541.

Clubb, Louise G. "Theatregrams." *Comparative Critical Approaches to Renaissance Comedy*, edited by Donald Beecher and Massimo Ciavolella, Ottawa, Canada: Dovehouse Editions, 1986, pp. 15-31.

Cohen, Gustave. *Histoire de la mise en scène dans le théâtre religieux francais du Moyen-âge*. Paris: Honoré Champion, 1908.

Cotarelo y Mori, Emilio. *Collección de Entremeses, Loas, Bailes, Jácaras y Mojigangas, desde fines del siglo XVI á mediados del XVIII*, Vol.1. Madrid: Casa Editorial Bailly Bailliére, 1911.

Cox Jensen, Freyja. *Reading the Roman Republic in Early Modern England*. Boston: Brill, 2012.

Cox, John D. *The Devil and the Sacred in English Drama, 1350-1642*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Curran, Andrew S. *The Anatomy of Blackness: Science & Slavery in an Age of Enlightenment.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011.

Cyrus, Miley. "We Can't Stop" and "Blurred Lines" Medley Performance with Robin Thicke. MTV Video Music Awards, 25 August 2013, Barclays Center, New York City.

D'Accone, Frank A. *The Civic Muse: Music and Musicians in Siena during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. University of Chicago Press, 1997.

Dandelet, Thomas James. *The Renaissance of Empire in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Daye, Anne. "The Role of *Le Balet comique* in Forging the Stuart Masque: Part 1, The Jacobean Initiative." *Dance Research*, vol 32, no. 2, 2014, pp. 185-207.

Delesalle Simone, and Lucette Valensi. "Le mot 'Nègre' dans les dictionnaires françcais d'Ancien régime: histoire et lexicographie." *Langue française*, vol. 15, 1972, pp. 79-104.

Delgado, Richard. *Critical Race Theory: an Introduction.* New York University Press, 2012.

---. "Two Ways to Think about Race: Reflections on the Id, the Ego, and Other Reformist Theories of Equal Protection." *Georgetown Law Journal*, vol. 89, no.7, 2001, pp. 2279-2296.

Desmond, Jane C. "Embodying Difference: Issues in Dance and Cultural Studies." *Cultural Critique,* vol. 26, 1994, pp. 33-63.

Dewar, Helen. "Souveraineté dans les colonies, souveraineté en métropole: le rôle de la Nouvelle-France dans la consolidation de l'autorité maritime en France, 1620-1628." *Revue d'Histoire de L'Amérique Française,* vol. 64, no. 3/4, 2011, pp. 63-92.

Dimmock, Matthew. "Converting and Not Converting 'Strangers' in Early Modern London." *Journal of Early Modern History,* vol. 17, no. 5/6, 2013, pp. 457-478.

Dobie, Madeleine. *Trading Places: Colonization and Slavery in Eighteenth-Century French Culture.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010.

Durham Peters, John. "Mass Media." *Critical Terms for Media Studies*, edited by W.J.T Mitchell and Mark B.N. Hansen, University of Chicago Press, 2010, pp. 266-279.

Elmaleh, Gad. "Les clichés." *L'Autre c'est moi*, one-man show, 12 February 2005, Bourse du Travail, Lyon, France.

Emery, Lynne Fauley. *Black Dance From 1619 to Today*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Book Co., 1988.

Erickson, Peter. "Invisibility Speaks: Servants and Portraits in Early Modern Visual Culture." *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies,* vol. 9, no.1, 2009, pp. 23-61.

Fabre, Geneviève. "The Slave Ship Dance." *Black Imagination and the Middle Passage*, edited by Maria Diedrich, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and Carl Pedersen, Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 33-47.

Fanon, Frantz. *Peau noire, masques blancs*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1952.

---. *The Wretched of the Earth*, translated by Constance Farrington, New York: Grove, 1963.

Farmer, Alan B. and Zachary Lesser. "The Popularity of Playbooks Revisited." *Shakespeare Quarterly*, vol. 56, no. 1, 2005, pp. 1-32.

Feerick, Jean E. *Strangers in Blood: Relocating Race in the Renaissance*. Buffalo, NY: University of Toronto Press, 2010.

Ferrer Valls, Teresa, ed. *Diccionario biográfico de actores del teatro clásico español (DICAT).* Kassel: Reichenberger, 2008.

---. "Las Dos caras del Diablo en el teatro antiguo español." *Convegno di Studi Diavoli e Mostri in scena dal Medio Evo al Rinascimento (Roma, 30 giugno/ 3 luglio 1988),* edited by Maria Chiabo, Federico Doglio, Roma: Centru Studi sul Teatro Medioevale e Rinascimentale, 1989, pp. 303-324.

Fleischer, Alain. *L'Accent, une langue fantôme.* Paris: Le Seuil, 2005.

Floyd-Wilson, Mary. "Temperature, Temperance, and Racial Difference in Ben Jonson's *The Masque of Blackness*." *English Literary Renaissance*, vol. 28, no. 2, 1998, pp. 183-209.

Forman, Valerie. *Tragicomic Redemptions: Global Economics and the Early Modern English Stage*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.

Fra-Molinero, Baltasar. *La imagen de los negros en el teatro del Siglo de Oro*. Madrid: SIGLO XXI DE ESPANA EDITORES, S.A. 1995.

---. "Ser mulato en España y America: discursos legales y otros discursos literarios." *Negros, mulatos, zambaigos: derroteros africanos en los mundos ibéricos*, edited by Berta Ares Queija and Alessandro Stella, Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2000, pp. 123-147.

Franko, Mark. *Dance as Text: Ideologies of the Baroque Body*. Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Freud, Sigmund. *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious.* The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume VIII, translated and edited by James Strachey, New York: Norton and Company, 1960.

Fuchs, Barbara. "No Field Is an Island: Postcolonial and Transnational Approaches to Early Modern Drama." *Renaissance Drama,* vol. 40, no.1, 2012, pp. 125-133.

---. *Passing for Spain: Cervantes and the Fictions of Identity.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003.

---. "The Spanish Race." *Re-Reading the Black Legend: The Discourses of Religious and Racial Difference in the Renaissance Empires*, edited by Margaret R. Greer, Walter D. Mignolo, and Maureen Quilligan, Oxford University Press, 2008, pp. 88-99.

Fulton, Thomas C. "The True and Naturall Constitution of That Mixed Government: Massinger's *The Bondman* and the Influence of Dutch Republicanism." *Studies in Philology,* vol. 99, no.2, 2002, pp. 152-177.

García-Luengos, Germán Vega. "La edición de obras dramáticas en el Siglo de Oro." *Las Puertas del drama*, vol. 41, 2013. www.aat.es/elkioscoteatral/las-puertas-del-drama/drama-41/la-edicion-de-obras-dramaticas-en-el-siglo-de-oro/.

Garraway, Doris. *The Libertine Colony: Creolization in the Early French Caribbean*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005.

Gillet, Joseph E. "Note on the Language of the Rustics in Sixteenth Century Drama." *Homenaje a Menéndez Pidal,* Tomo I, Madrid 1926, pp. 443-453.

Giraud, Paul-Emile. *Mise en scène et représentation du mystère des Trois Doms*. Lyon: Louis Perrin, 1848.

Goetz, Rebecca. *The Baptism of Early Virginia*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2012.

Goldberg, David Theo. "The Comparative and the Relational: Meditations on Racial Methods." *A Companion to Comparative Literature,* edited by Ali Behdad and Dominic Thomas, Chichester, West Sussex; Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, pp. 357-168.

Goldberg, Jonathan. *James I and the Politics of Literature: Jonson, Shakespeare, Donne, and their Contemporaries*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989.

Goya, Francisco. *El guitarrista ciego*. 1776, oil on canvas, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid.

Granda de, Germán. *El español en tres mundos: retenciones y contactos lingüísticos en América y Africa*. Universidad de Valladolid, Secretariado de Publicaciones, 1991.

Greenblatt, Stephen. *Shakespearean Negotiations: the Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980.

Gurr, Andrew. *The Shakespearian Playing Companies*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Haar, James. "Orlando di Lasso, Composer and Print Entrepreneur." *Music and the Cultures of Print,* edited by Kate van Orden, New York: Garland Pub, 2000, pp. 125-162.

Habib, Imtiaz. *Black lives in the English Archives, 1500-1677: Imprints of the Invisible*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008.

Hall, Kim F. "Object into Object? Some Thoughts on the Presence of Black Women in Early Modern Culture." *Early Modern Visual Culture: Representation, Race, and Empire in Renaissance England*, edited by Peter Erickson and Clark Hulse, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000, pp. 346-377.

---. *Things of Darkness: Economics of Race and Gender in Early Modern England*, Cornell University Press, 1996.

Hall, Stuart. "Representation and the Media." Produced and directed by Sut Jhally, Northampton, MA: Media Education Foundation, 1997.

---. "Spectacle of the Other." *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, edited by Stuart Hall, London; Thousand Oaks, Cal.: Sage, 1997, pp. 223-290.

---. "Subjects in History: Making Diasporic Identities." *The House that Race Built*, edited by Wahneema Lubiano, New York: Pantheon Books, 1997, pp. 289-299.

Hannaford, Ivan. *Race: The History of an Idea in the West.* Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1996.

Hartman, Saidiya V. *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America.* New York*:* Oxford University Press, 1997.

Hazzard-Donald, Katrina. *Jookin': The Rise of Social Dance Formations in African-American Culture*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990.

Helfers, James P. "The Explorer or the Pilgrim? Modern Critical Opinion and the Editorial Methods of Richard Hakluyt and Samuel Purchas." *Studies in Philology*, vol. 94, no. 2, 1997, pp. 160-186.

Heng, Geraldine. "The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages: Locations of Medieval Race I." *Literature Compass*, vol.8, no.5, 2011, pp. 315-331.

Herford, C., H., Percy Simpson and Evelyn Simpson, eds. *Play Commentary; Masque Commentary*. *Ben Jonson. Vol. 10*. Oxford University Press, 1950.

Herzog, Tamar. "How Did Early Modern Slaves in Spain Disappear? The Antecedents." *Republics of Letters: A Journal for the Study of Knowledge, Politics, and the Arts,* vol. 3, no.1 (2012), pp. 1-7.

Hollis, Gavin. *The Absence of America: The London Stage, 1576-1642*. Oxford University Press, 2015.

Howard, Jean E. *Theater of a City: the Places of London Comedy, 1598-1642*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007.

Howard, Skiles. *The politics of Courtly Dancing in Early Modern England*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998.

Inda, Jonathan Xavier. "Performativity, Materiality, and the Racial Body." *Latino Studies Journal*, vol. 11, no.3, 2000, pp. 74-99.

Irigoyen-García, Javier. *The Spanish Arcadia: Sheep Herding, Pastoral Discourse, and Ethnicity in Early Modern Spain*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014.

Jacobs-Jenkins, Branden. *An Octoroon*. New York: Dramatists Service Inc, 2015.

Jones, Ann Rosalind. "Maidservants of London: Sisterhood of Kinship and Labor." *Maids and Mistresses, Cousins and Queens: Women's Alliances in Early Modern England,* edited by Susan Frye and Karen Robertson*,* New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 21-32.

Jones, Ann Rosalind and Peter Stallybrass. "Dismantling Irena: the Sexualizing of Ireland in Early Modern England." *Nationalisms and Sexualities*, edited by Andrew Parker, Mary Russo, Doris Sommer, and Patricia Yaeger, New York: Routledge, 1992, pp. 157-174.

Jones, Nicholas. "Hyperbolic Hybridities*: Habla De Negros* and the Economies of Race and Language in Early Modern Spanish Poetry and Theater." Dissertation, New York University, 2013.

Jordan, Winthrop D. *White Over Black: American Attitudes Towards the Negro, 1550-1812*. New York: Norton, 1968.

Kadish, Doris Y. *Fathers, Daughters, and Slaves: Women Writers and French Colonial Slavery*. Liverpool University Press, 2012.

Kaplan, Paul H. D. "The Calenberg Altarpiece: Black African Christians in Renaissance Germany." *Germany and the Black Diaspora, Points of Contact, 1250-1914*, edited by Mischa Honeck, Martin Klimke, and Anne Kuhlmann-Smirnov, New York: Berghahn Books, 2013, pp. 21-37.

Karim-Cooper, Farah. "'This alters not thy beauty': Facepaint, Gender and Race in Richard Brome's *The English Moor*." *Early Theatre,* vol. 10, no. 2, 2007, pp. 140-149.

Kaufmann, Miranda. "Africans in Britain, 1500-1640." Dissertation, Oxford University, 2012

---. "Slavery Shouldn't Distort the History of Black People in Britain." *The Guardian*, 17 October 2012.

---. "Traces of Shame?" *The Times Literary Supplement*, 5497 (2008).

Keenan, Siobhan. *Travelling Players in Shakespeare's England*. New York: Palgrave McMillan, 2002.

King-Dorset, Rodreguez. *Black Dance in London, 1730-1850: Innovation, Tradition and Resistance.* Jefferson, N.C: McFarland and Company, 2008.

Knowles, Mark. *The Early History of Tap Dancing*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland and Company, 2002.

Knutson, Roslyn L. "A Caliban in St. Mildred Poultry." *Shakespeare and Cultural Traditions: The Selected Proceedings of the International Shakespeare Association World Congress, Tokyo, 1991*, edited by Tetsuo Kishi, Roger Pringle, and Stanley Wells, Newark, NJ: Delaware University Press, 1994, pp. 110-26.

Labov, William. *Sociolinguistic Patterns.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972.

Larquié, Claude. "Les esclaves Madrid à l'époque de la décadence, 1650-1700." *Revue Historique*, vol. 244, no.1, 1970, pp, 41-74.

Lebègue Raymond. "Le Diable dans l'ancien théâtre religieux." *Cahiers de l'Association*

internationale des études francaises, vol. 3, no.5, 1953, pp. 97-105.

Leeb, Michel. "L'Africain." *Champs-Elysées*, Antenne 2 (National TV), 25 June 1983.

Lihani, John. "A Literary Jargon of Early Spanish Drama: the *sayagués* Dialect." *Linguistic Approaches to the Romance Lexicon*, edited by Frank H. Nuessel Jr. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1978, pp. 39-44.

Lipski, John M. *A History of Afro-Hispanic Language: Five Centuries, Five Continents*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Lobato, María Luisa. "La edición de textos teatrales breves." *La Edición de textos, Actas del I congreso internacional de hispanistas del Siglo de Oro*, edited by Pablo Jauralde, Dolores Noguera, and Alfonso Rey, London: Tamesis Books Limited, 1990, pp. 287-294.

Locke, Ralph P. *Music and the Exotic from the Renaissance to Mozart*. Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Loomba, Ania, and Jonathan Burton. *Race in Early Modern England: a Documentary Companion*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

López Morales, Humberto. *Tradición y creación en los orígenes del teatro castellano.* Madrid: Ediciones Alcalá, 1968.

Lost Plays Database. www.lostplays.org/. Accessed 14 March 2017

Lott, Eric. *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class*. New York: Oxford University press, 1993.

Lowe, Kate. "The Stereotyping of Black Africans in Renaissance Europe." *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*, edited by Kate Lowe and T.F. Earle, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp. 17-47.

Lucena Salmoral, Manuel. "Leyes para esclavos: El ordenamiento jurídico sobre la condición, tratamiento, defensa y repression de los esclavos en las colonias de la América española." *Tres grandes cuestiones de la historia de Iberoamérica: ensayos y monografías*, edited by José Andrés Gallego, Madrid: Fundación MAPFRE Tavera, 2005, pp. 1-1384.

MacDonald, Joyce. *Women and Race in Early Modern Texts*. Cambridge University Press, 2002.

McGowan, Margaret. *Dance in the Renaissance: European Fashion, French Obsession*. New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008.

---. *La Danse à la Renaissance: sources livresques et albums d'images*. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 2012.

---. *The Court Ballet of Louis XIII: A Collection of working designs for costumes 1615-1633*. London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1987.

McKee, Sally. "Domestic Slavery in Renaissance Italy." *Slavery and Abolition,* vol. 29, no. 3, 2008, pp. 305-326.

MacLean, Sally-Beth. "Tour Routes: 'Provincial Wanderings' or Traditional Circuits?" *Medieval & Renaissance Drama in England,* vol. 6, 1993, pp. 1-14.

McManus, Clare. *Women on the Renaissance Stage: Anna of Denmark and Female Masquing in the Stuart Court, 1590-1619*. Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press: Distributed exclusively in the USA by Palgrave, 2002.

Marcus, Sharon. "The Theatre of Comparative Literature." *A Companion to Comparative Literature,* edited by Ali Behdad and Dominic Thomas, Chichester, West Sussex; Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, pp. 136-155.

Marsh, Christopher W. *Music and Society in Early Modern England*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Martín-Casares, Aurelia and Marga G. Barranco. "Popular Literary Depictions of Black African Weddings in Early Modern Spain." *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme,* vol. 31, no. 2, 2008, pp. 107-121.

---. "The Musical Legacy of Black Africans in Spain: A Review of our Sources." *Anthropological Notebooks,* vol. 15, no. 2, 2009, pp. 51—60.

Martín-Casares, Aurelia and Christine Delaigue. "The Evangelization of Freed and Slave Black Africans in Renaissance Spain: Baptism, Marriage, and Ethnic Brotherhoods." *History of Religions*, vol. 52, no. 3, 2013, pp. 214-235.

Mateo Alcalá, María Luisa. "Máscaras y tocados para las figuras infernales del *Códice de autos viejos*." *Teatro de Palabras: revista sobre teatro áureo*, vol. 5, 2011), pp. 163-195.

Mayer, Tamar. "Gender Ironies of Nationalism: Setting the Stage." *Gender Ironies of Nationalism: Sexing the Nation*, edited by Tamar Mayer, New York: Routledge, 2000, pp. 1-24.

Médevielle, Nicolas P.A. "La Racialisation des Africains: récits commerciaux, religieux, philosophiques et littéraires 1480-1880." Dissertation, Ohio State University, 2006.

Meyers, Mélanie. "La Belle Esclave, Tragicomédie de Claude de l'Estoille, édition critique." M.A. Thesis, Université Sorbonne-Paris IV, 2010.

Miller, Anthony. *Roman Triumphs and Early Modern English Culture*. New York: Palgrave, 2001.

Mills, Kenneth, William B. Taylor, and Sandra Lauderdale Graham, eds. *Colonial Latin America: a Documentary History*, Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 2002.

Moreno Mendoza, Arsenio. "La figura del demonio en el teatro y la pintura del Siglo de Oro español." *Atrio: revista de historia del arte*, 15-16 (2009), pp. 149-156.

Moreno Muñoz, María José. "La danza teatral en el siglo XVII." Dissertation, Universidad de Córdoba, 2010.

Moreno Navarro, Isidoro. *La antigua hermandad de los negros de Sevilla: etnicidad, poder y sociedad en 600 años de historia.* Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla: Consejería de Cultura de la Junta de Andalucía, 1997.

Mullen, Edward J. "Simón Aguado's *Entremés de los negros*: Text and Context." *Comparative Drama*, vol. 20, no. 3, 1986, pp. 231-246.

Navarro García, José Luis. *Semillas de Ebano, el elemento negro y afroamericano en el baile flamenco.* Sevilla: Portada Editorial, 1990.

Ndiaye, Noémie. "Aaron's Roots: Spaniards, Englishmen, and Blackamoors in *Titus Andronicus*." *Early Theatre*, vol. 19, no. 2, 2016, pp. 59-80.

---. "'Everyone Breeds in His Own Image': Staging the *Aethiopica* across the Channel." *Renaissance Drama*, vol. 44, no. 2, 2016, pp. 157-185.

Neill, Michael. "Broken English and Broken Irish: Nation, Language, and the Optics of Power in Shakespeare's Histories." *Shakespeare Quarterly*, vol. 4, no.1, 1994, pp. 1-32.

Nevile, Jennifer. *Dance, Spectacle, and the Body Politick, 1250-1750*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008.

---. *The Eloquent Body: Dance and Humanist Culture in Fifteenth Century Italy*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004.

Nichols, John ed. *The Progresses, Processions, and Magnificent Festivities of King James the First*. London: Printed by and for J.B Nicholas, 1828.

Nirenberg, David. "Race and the Middle Ages." *Rereading the Black Legend: The Discourses of Racism in the Renaissance Empires,* edited by Margaret R. Greer, Walter D. Mignolo, and Maureen Quilligan, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007, pp. 71-87.

Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. "Racial Formations." *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States, an Integrated Study*, edited by Paula S. Rothenberg, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992, pp. 13-22.

---. *Racial Formation in the U.S: From the 1960s to the 1980s.* New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987.

Operstein, Natalie. "Golden Age *Poesía de Negros* and Orlando di Lasso's *Moresche*: a Possible Connection." *Romance Notes*, vol. 52, no.1, 2012, 13-18.

Orgel, Stephen. *The Jonsonian Masque.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965.

Palatín, Fernando. *Diccionario de música, Sevilla, 1818.* Oviedo: Universidad de Oviedo, 1990.

Paquot, Michel. *Les Etrangers dans les divertissements de la cour, de Beaujoyeulx à Molière (1581-1673).* Bruxelles: Palais des Académies, 1932.

Peabody, Susan. *"There Are No Slaves in France": The Political Culture of Race and Slavery in the Ancien Régime.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Peñasco de la Puente, Hilario and Carlos Cambronero. *Las calles de Madrid: noticias, tradiciones y curiosidades*. Madrid: Administración, 1889.

Pérez, Elizabeth. "The Ontology of Twerk: from 'Sexy' Black Movement Style to Afro-Diasporic Sacred Dance." *African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal*, vol. 9, no.1, 2016, p. 16-31.

Perret, Michèle. *Introduction à l'histoire de la langue française*. Paris: A. Colin, 2014.

Picard, Liza. *Elizabeth's London: Everyday Life in Elizabethan London*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2003.

Plans, Antonio Salvador. "Los Lenguajes 'especiales' y de las minorías en el siglo de oro." *Historia de la lengua española*, edited by Rafael Cano, Barcelona: Editorial Planeta, 2004, pp. 771-798.

Preston, V. K. "Un/Becoming Nomad: Marc Lescarbot, Movement, and Metamorphosis in *Les Muses de la Nouvelle France." History, Memory, Performance*, edited by David Dean, Yana Meerzon, Kathryn Prince, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, pp. 68-82.

Quéruel, Danielle. "Des gestes à la danse: l'exemple de la 'Morisque' à la fin du Moyen-Âge." *Le geste et les gestes au Moyen-âge*, Aix-en-Provence: CUER MA, Université de Provence (Centre d'Aix), 1998, pp. 499-517.

Records of Early English Drama http://reed.utoronto.ca/.

Reynolds, Erin. "Strange Accents or Ill Shapen Sounds: Dialect in Early Modern Drama." 2008 March 2017. http://homes.chass.utoronto.ca/~cpercy/courses/6362-ReynoldsErin.htm.

Rice, Eric. "Motets, Madrigals and Moresche: Orlando di Lasso's Music for the Commedia dell'Arte at a 1568 Wedding" (Program leaflet). Ensemble Origo concert, 8 October 2015, The Italian Academy, Columbia University.

Roach, Joseph. *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance.* New York: Columbia University Press: 1996.

Rodríguez López-Vázquez, Alfredo. "Cervantes y el entremés de *los mirones:* bases objetivas para su atribución." *Etiópicas: Revista de Letras Renacentistas,* vol.7, no.7, 2011, pp. 57-63.

---. "*Las carnestolendas*: problemas de atribución y fijación textual." *Calderón, protagonista eminente del barroco europeo*, edited by Kurt and Theo Reichenberg, Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 2000, pp. 477-500.

Royster, Francesca T. "White-limed Walls: Whiteness and Gothic Extremism in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus,*" *Shakespeare Quarterly,* vol. 5, no. 4, 2000, pp. 432—455.

Sahlins, Peter. *Unnaturally French: Foreign Citizens in the Old Regime and After*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. "Orphée Noir." *Anthologie de la nouvelle poésie nègre et malgache de langue française*, edited by Léopold Sédar Senghor, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1948, pp. IX-XLIV.

Schaub Jean-Frédéric and Silvia Sebastiani. "Between Genealogy and Physicality: A Historiographical Perspective on Race in the Ancien Régime." *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal*, vol. 35, no.1, 2014, pp. 23-51.

Schlueter, June. "Rereading the Peacham Drawing." *Shakespeare Quarterly*, vol. 50, no. 2, 1999, pp. 171-184.

Schmalenberger, Sarah. "Hearing the Other in the *Masque of Blackness*." *Blackness in Opera*, edited by Naomi Andre, Karen M. Bryan, and Eric Saylor, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012, pp. 32-54.

Schorsch, Jonathan. *Swimming the Christian Atlantic: Judeoconversos, Afroiberians and Amerindians in the Seventeenth Century.* Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2009.

Scolieri, Paul A. *Dancing the New World: Aztecs, Spaniards, and the Choreography of Conquest*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2013.

Sentaurens, Jean. *Séville et le théâtre: de la fin du Moyen Age à la fin du XVIIe siècle*. Lille: Atelier national de reproduction des thèses, Université de Lille III; Talence: Diffusion, Presses universitaires de Bordeaux, Université de Bordeaux III, 1984.

Serrera Contreras, Ramón María, ed. *El Arenal de Sevilla de Lope de Vega.* Seville: El Ayuntamiento de Sevilla, Colección "Sevilla lee," 2007.

Shange, Ntozake. "Why I had to DANCE." *Black Renaissance,* vol. 6/7, no. 3/1, 2006, pp. 40-42.

Sherbo, Arthur and Bronson, Bertrand H. eds. *Johnson on Shakespeare*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968. The Yale Digital Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson, Vol. 7.

Skinner, Quentin. "Hobbes and the Classical Theory of Laughter." *Leviathan after 350 Years*, edited by Tom Sorell and Luc Foisneau. Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 139-166.

Sloman, Albert E. *The Dramatic Craftmanship of Calderón, His Use of Earlier Plays*. Oxford: The Dolphin Book Co. Ltd., 1958.

Smith, Ian. "Othello's Black Handkerchief," *Shakespeare Quarterly,* 64:1 (2013), pp. 1-25.
---. *Race and Rhetoric in the Renaissance: Barbarian Errors*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

Stam, Robert and Ella Shohat. *Race in Translation: Culture Wars around the Postcolonial Atlantic*. New York: New York University Press, 2012.

Stanley-Niaah, Sonjah Nadine. *Dancehall: From Slave Ship to Ghetto*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2010.

Steggle, Matthew. Introduction. *The English Moor, or the Mock-Marriage*, edited by Matthew Steggle. *Richard Brome Online* (http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/brome, <03/04/16>).

Stella, Alessandro. *Histoires d'esclaves dans la péninsule ibérique*. Paris: EHESS, 2000.

Stern, Charlotte. "Sayago and Sayagués in Spanish History and Literature." *Hispanic Review*, vol. 29, no.3, 1961, pp. 217-237.

Sterne, Jonathan. *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.

---. "The Theology of Sound, A critique of Orality." *Canadian Journal of Communication*, vol. 36, 2011, pp. 207-225.

Stevens, Andrea. "Mastering Masques of Blackness: Jonson's *Masque of Blackness,* The Windsor text of *The Gypsies Metamorphosed,* and Brome's *The English Moor.*" *English Literary Renaissance,* vol. 39, no. 2, 2009, pp. 396-426.

Sutton, Julia et al. "Dance." *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press. 10 Mar. 2017. http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/45795.

Swiadon, Glenn. "Los villancicos de negro: breve introducción al género." *Dimensión Antropológica*, vol. 5, no. 14, 1998. 133-147.

Taylor, Diana. *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.

Teyssier, Paul. *La langue de Gil Vicente*. Paris: Klincksieck, 1959.

Thorpe, Edward. *Black Dance*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1989.

Tokson, Eliot. *The Popular Image of the Black Man in English Drama 1550-1688.* Boston: G.K Hall, 1982.

Townley Spencer, Benjamin. *Philip Massinger's The Bondsman, an Antient Storie*. Princeton University Press, 1932

Trambaioli, Marcella. "Apuntes sobre el guineo o baile de negros: tipologías y funciones dramáticas." *Actas del VI Congreso de la Asociación Internacional Siglo de Oro*, edited by Maria Luisa Lobato and F. Domínguez Matito, Madrid: Iberoamericana-Vervuert, 2004, pp. 1773-1783.

Ungerer, Gustav. "The Presence of Africans in Elizabethan England and the Performance of *Titus Andronicus* at Burley-on-the-Hill, 1595/96." *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, vol. 21, 2008, pp. 19-55.

Urzáiz Tortajada, Héctor. *Catálogo de autores teatrales del siglo XVII*. Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 2002.

Valbuena-Briones, Angel. "Los papeles cómicos y las hablas dialectales en dos comedias de Calderón." *Thesaurus: Boletin del Instituto Caro y Cuervo*, vol. 42, no.1, 1987, pp. 47-59.

Vaughan, Alden T. "The Origins Debate: Slavery and Racism in Seventeenth-Century Virginia." *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. 97, no.3, 1989, pp. 311-354.

Vaughan, Virginia Mason. *Performing Blackness on English Stages, 1500-1800*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Vega García-Luengos, Germán. **"**La edición de obras dramáticas en el Siglo de Oro." *Las Puertas del Drama*, vol. 41, 2013. http://www.aat.es/elkioscoteatral/las-puertas-del-drama/drama-41/la-edicion-de-obras-dramaticas-en-el-siglo-de-oro/.

Vitkus, Daniel J. *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570-1630.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

Weber de Kurlat, Frida. "Latinismos arrusticados en el sayagués." *Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1947, pp. 166-170.

---. "Sobre el negro como tipo cómico en el teatro espanol del siglo XVI." *Romance Philology*, vol. 17, no. 2, 1963, pp. 380-391.

Weissbourd, Emily. "Those in Their Possession": Race, Slavery, and Queen Elizabeth's 'Edicts of Expulsion'." *Huntington Library Quarterly*, vol. 78, no. 1, 2015, pp. 1-19.

---. "Transnational Genealogies: Jews, Blacks and Moors in Early Modern English and Spanish Literature, 1547-1642." Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2011.

Welch, Ellen R. "Dancing the Nation: Performing France in the Seventeenth-Century *Ballets des nations*." *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies,* vol. 13, no. 2, 2013, pp. 3-23.

---. "The Specter of the Turk in Early Modern French Court Entertainments." *Esprit Créateur,* vol. 53, no. 4, 2013, pp. 84-97.

Wikström, Toby. "Law, Conquest and Slavery on the French Stage, 1598-1685." Dissertation, Columbia University, 2010.

Williams, Raymond. *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford University Press, 1977.

Wistreich, Richard. *Warrior, Courtier, Singer: Giulio Cesare Brancaccio and the Performance of Identity in the Late Renaissance*. Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007.

Yates, Frances A. "English Actors in Paris During Shakespeare's Lifetime." *The Review of English Studies*, vol. 1, no. 4, 1925, pp. 392-403.

Zantop, Susanne. *Colonial Fantasies: Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770-1870.* Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997.